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The times of the Gentiles as

Jos. Addison Alexander,
Princeton,
April 26, 1853.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.



THE
TIMES OF THE GENTILES,

AS REVEALED IN

The Apocalypse.

BY

DOMINICK M'CAUSLAND, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LATTER DAYS OF THE JEWISH CHURCH AND NATION."

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"Let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come."—ISAIAH, xli. 22.  
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D U B L I N

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P r e f a c e .

THERE is no portion of the prophetic Scriptures which has, of late years, occupied so much attention, and as regards the interpretation of which there has been so much discussion and controversy among those who profess and hold all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, as that which is the subject of investigation in the following pages; and the result has been, that while, by reason of such discussions, knowledge has progressed among the great body of Christian inquirers who seek for information in such matters, the authors of the respective treatises on the subject have, in their zeal to uphold the different views to which they are pledged, become blinded to the real merits of the discoveries and arguments of their opponents. Such is the usual effect of controversy. The author of these pages has long been of opinion that the truth in this, as in most other subjects of con-

troversy among parties who concur in first principles, lies between the extremes; and he would inculcate on the student of prophecy, that as there is knowledge of real value to be found in the writings of both parties, great care must be taken, that in rejecting what is erroneous, he does not cast away what may, perhaps, be the only lights that can guide him out of the darkness and obscurities of apocalyptic revelation.

In his endeavours thus to approximate to the meaning of these prophecies, the author has been influenced by the spirit of an inquirer rather than that of a controversialist—his method has been to lead his readers, in the first instance, to the recognition and adoption of correct principles and doctrines, and then to draw them onwards to their natural and inevitable results—and the effect, he humbly trusts, will be to induce others to follow out a system of investigation, which he feels assured leads to an enlarged knowledge of this revelation of God's will to man.

Many have been deterred from such studies by the impression that what has not been hitherto fully and satisfactorily discovered, is past finding

out, and must, therefore, necessarily be of minor importance to the Christian. But the following pages may show that difficulties will melt away as we approach and survey them by the light of the other divine records. *Non quia difficilia sunt non audemus, sed quia non audemus difficilia sunt.* And as regards the importance of the subject, the mere circumstance of God having given such a revelation to mankind is, irrespective of the internal evidence of the same, demonstrative of the surpassing interest that man ought to have in the study of what it is intended to convey.

Who that has contemplated the miracle of his own existence, that has not felt an assurance of a continuance of that existence beyond the grave; and to endeavour to trace, in the few pages of "The Book of the Revelation," what God has ordained to come to pass in fulfilment of his purposes with regard to the human race, both in this life and that which is to come, is an inquiry worthy, beyond all others, of the highest, but which will be found, from the contents of the following pages, to be within the reach of the humblest intellect in the community. The qualifications of the inquirer need

not, as will appear, extend beyond a knowledge of what is contained in the pages of the Bible ; and such an acquaintance with past and current events as is within the experience and observation of almost every Christian of the present day. This section of God's Word is thus brought within, what was obviously the divine intention, the reach of every mind. And the Author, trusting that many may be found to follow in, and open out, the same paths of inquiry, now casts his bread upon the waters, with an humble confidence that whatever of truth may be therein will be found, even though "after many days"—and with a sincere hope that whatever of error shall have proceeded from his pen, may be speedily exposed and rectified, to the advancement of true knowledge, and the increase of its fruits.

D. M'C.

DUBLIN, AUGUST 20, 1852.

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INTRODUCTION.



“MANY shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

DAN. xii. 4.

ALL the commentaries which have been written on the Book of Revelations, appear to be distinguished by the writers of the present day as belonging to one or the other of two classes, viz., those in which the prophecies therein contained, commencing with the fourth chapter, have been considered and treated as altogether unfulfilled; and those in which the same have been regarded and treated as for the most part fulfilled, or in progress of fulfilment. The former of these two modes of viewing these all-important revelations appears to have been prevalent among the members of the Church from the earliest times of Christianity down to the twelfth century; and during that period, the Antichrist seems invariably to have been interpreted to be an individual who is to arise, and exercise dominion, in the latter days of this dispensation. However, in the twelfth century, when the Papacy commenced the more open manifestation of its antichristian powers of persecution, the latter mode of interpreting this book began to prevail; and from that time down to a comparatively recent period, all commentators seem to have

concurred in the principle of construing the prophecies of the Beast, the False Prophet, the Scarlet Whore, and the other symbolic predictions of beings, or systems of iniquity, to be found in the Apocalypse, as having had their fulfilment in the Romish Apostasy.

Thus, it would appear, that the hinge on which this diversity of interpretation turned, was the nature of the Antichrist—whether the predictions concerning that being have been accomplished in Popery and the Poppedom, or whether they remain to be fulfilled in the still future manifestation of an individual. This will be found to be the all-important question for decision; and we hope to be enabled, with God's assistance, to demonstrate, in the course of the inquiries on which we are about to enter, that those who hold the doctrine of a still future manifestation of the Antichrist predicted by Daniel and St. Paul, must concur in the view taken by us in our previous treatise,* and that which we are about to follow out in this, respecting the meaning and import of those inspired disclosures of God's dealings with mankind in this dispensation.

We have already, in the 7th chapter of "The Latter Days," explained very fully our views respecting Romanism and the Antichrist, which were shortly to this effect—that St. Paul had written to the Thessalonians concerning a "mystery of iniquity," which had commenced its operations in his days, and was to continue to work until it should have expanded

* "The Latter Days of the Jewish Church and Nation."

itself into an open revelation of "the Man of Sin," who was described by him as one "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God;" and who is likewise condemned to destruction by the brightness of the Lord's coming. This "mystery of iniquity" has a fulfilment in Popery, which will continue its secret workings as the agent of Satan, until, in the fulness of time, its covert perniciousness shall be openly manifested, and revealed without disguise, in the avowed principles and proceedings of an incarnation of apostasy and blasphemy, in the person of the being called the Antichrist, who shall be a literal accomplishment of the prediction of "the Man of Sin."

In conformity with these principles, we shall, we trust, be enabled to trace, in the portion of the Book of Revelations to which we are about to direct our attention—and which we stated in our former treatise, was to be taken as a series of predictions of God's proceedings with the Gentile branch of his Church—prophecies, as well of "the mystery of iniquity," as of "the Antichrist," or "the Man of Sin;" and both of them revealed as the leading instruments by which Satan deceives and destroys his victims throughout this dispensation.

From these observations, it will at once appear, that the view which we take of this book cannot with propriety be classed with either of those modes of viewing it to which we have alluded. We, in fact, agree with the first, in regarding the prophecies of

the Antichrist predicted by St. Paul as unfulfilled ; and we agree with the second, in recognising in the Papacy one of the instruments with which Satan assails the Church ; and, consequently, one of the objects of the Revelations we are about to consider : while we differ from both, in not confining the prophecies to either the one or the other of these two forms of iniquity—the Papacy, or the Antichrist.

In this view we are happy to have the concurrence of Mr. Bickersteth, who, in his Prefatory Remarks to his edition of Bishop Hurd's "Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies," observes:—"In our day, and among professing Protestants, another method has been adopted of diverting these prophecies from their application to the Papacy, by applying them to a future infidel power, of sudden rise, and of short duration. *That such a power is to appear admits of Scripture proof ; and further, that Popery will issue in this, there are fair Scriptural presumptions ;* but that the Apocalypse refers to this mainly or exclusively, and not to the whole of the Papacy, is neither reasonable in itself, nor true upon any principles of sound interpretation."

Mr. Birks, in his "Elements of Prophecy," has furnished us with a test by which to distinguish those commentators which belong to the second, from those which belong to the first, of the foregoing classes ; and he has placed us among those of the first class, whom he has denominated "Futurists," by reason of our exposition of the symbolic visions of the seals and trumpets as unfulfilled prophecies. We hope, however, to be able to establish the posi-

tion, that such a view is not only perfectly compatible with his own admitted principles, but that, consistently with them, it will be impossible for him to refuse his assent to the consequences which we have deduced therefrom. He observes:—

“Ever since the time of the Reformation, the following maxims in the interpretation of the sacred prophecies have been gradually received by the Protestant Churches:—

“1st. That the visions of Daniel commence with the times of the prophet.

“2nd. That the events predicted in the Apocalypse begin from the time of the prophecy, or within the first century.

“3rd. That the fourth Beast denotes the Roman empire.

“4th. That Babylon in the Apocalypse denotes Rome.

“5th. That the little horn in Daniel vii. denotes the Papacy.

“6th. That the Man of Sin relates to the same powers.

“7th. That the prophecy in 1 Tim. iv. is fulfilled in past events.

“8th. That Babylon denotes, at least inclusively, Rome Papal.

“The three following have also been received by the most learned and able commentators of our own country, from the time of Mede down to the present day.

“9th. That the two woes relate to the Saracens and Turks.

“10th. That the two Beasts in Rev. xiii. denote the civil and ecclesiastical Latin empire.

“11th. That a prophetic day denotes a natural year, and a prophetic time three hundred and sixty natural years.

“Of these leading maxims, the first four are held by the fathers of the early Church and most of the Roman commentators, as well as by the Reformed Churches. On the other hand, the three last, though generally received by interpreters of the English Church, are rejected by many foreign Protestant, especially among the Lutheran, divines. All of these maxims, however, without distinction, have been rejected by several late writers. Mr. Burgh, Mr. Maitland, Dr. Todd, Mr. Dodsworth,

Mr. Tyso, and Mr. M'Causland, and more recently, Mr. Govett, are the chief of those whose names have appeared ; and of these the three first are, doubtless, the leaders. To those, several anonymous writers may be added." *

Now, with respect to these eleven maxims, we do not dissent from any of them, except the 5th, 6th, 9th, and 10th. The 9th we shall not, at present, embarrass ourselves with, as it properly belongs to the subject-matter of our previous treatise. Passing this by, therefore, the only differences that will then be found to exist between our principles and those which Mr. Birks lays down as the maxims of interpretation which have been generally received by the Protestant Churches, are, that neither the "Man of Sin," nor the "Little Horn"† in Daniel vii., denote the Papacy ; and that the two Beasts in Rev. xiii. do not denote the civil and ecclesiastical Latin empire. It is obvious, then, that the sole difference which exists between our views and those patronised by Mr. Birks, as regards that part of the Book of Revelations which is the subject of this treatise, turns entirely, as we have before observed, on the nature of the Antichrist—whether the prophecies relating thereto have been fulfilled in the Papacy, or still remain to be fulfilled in the future revelation of an individual Man

* "Elements of Prophecy," p. 1.

† We suggested, in "The Latter Days," that the Little Horn symbolized the Papacy. But our investigation respecting the nature of the beings symbolized by the two Beasts of the Apocalypse, have led us to the conclusion that it is primarily symbolical of the Antichrist, who will be the development of the Papacy, as will appear more fully in the following pages.

of Sin. If the former be the correct view of Scripture truth, then the system which Mr. Birks seeks to uphold ought to continue to prevail; but if the latter be the true meaning and import of the prophecies, we shall find no difficulty in showing that it must be abandoned, and the scheme or system of interpretation which we advocate must be resorted to—and why? because the Little Horn, the Man of Sin, and the Beast and False Prophet, all denote the last form in which iniquity shall appear upon the earth before the coming of the Lord to exterminate it; inasmuch as each and all of them are represented in Scripture as being destroyed by Christ at his second coming; and therefore, to confine those predictions to the Papacy, would be to omit altogether from the Apocalypse, and almost, if not altogether, from the other pages of prophetic Scripture, any revelation of the Antichrist. On the other hand, the Papacy, symbolised, as we admit it to be, by the Scarlet Whore, is not the last form of iniquity; for it is not represented as destroyed by Christ at his second advent, and is, therefore, consistently with our exposition, the preceding “mystery of iniquity,” which had commenced its operations in the days of St. Paul, by whom the Man of Sin is represented as destroyed by the brightness of the Lord’s coming, while the Scarlet Whore is described in the Revelations as destroyed by the ten horns of the Beast.

Thus, it is manifest, that those who concur in our view of the prophecies of the Antichrist, or the Man of Sin, viz., that they will be fulfilled in the manifestation of an individual, or of an infidel power,

of sudden rise and short duration, in the latter days of this dispensation, who will consummate iniquity by exalting himself above the God of Heaven, must reject those maxims of the interpreters which confine the prophecies of the Little Horn of Daniel, the Man of Sin of St. Paul, and the two Beasts of the Apocalypse, to the Papacy alone.

Now, it is not a little remarkable, that Mr. Birks, who has assailed our views of prophecy, in accusing us of having rejected the maxims of interpretation received by the Protestant Churches, has admitted that he holds the same views respecting the nature of the Antichrist which we hold, and have just now explained; and if our reasoning be correct, it will follow, that he must, in consistency, reject the very same of the foregoing maxims which are rejected by us. Thus, in "The Elements of Prophecy,"* he writes:—"There are few doctrines which the Futurists press more earnestly than the application of these words (the abomination of desolation) to a future desolation of Jerusalem, when the infidel Antichrist shall take his seat in the restored temple. *That such events will take place in the Holy City, from various other passages of Scripture, I fully believe.*" The same view is to be found enunciated at the close of the 7th chapter of the same book;† and again, more fully, in his exposition of the latter part of the 11th chapter of Daniel, in "The Two Later Visions of Daniel," c. 19.‡

If, then, there is to be a future desolation of Jeru-

* Page 204.

† Page 181.

‡ Pages 337-341.

saalem, when the infidel Antichrist shall take his seat in the restored temple, as Mr. Birks admits will be the case, will not that event be a literal fulfilment of St. Paul's prediction of the Man of Sin; "so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God?" and if so, an interpretation of the Apocalypse which opens out a revelation of "the Man of Sin," as well as a revelation of the precedent "mystery of iniquity," the Papacy, is more consistent with itself, and more consonant with God's declared will, than one which concentrates all the predictions, and that too, as we shall presently show, in utter disregard of all harmony and propriety of construction, in Romanism alone.

If these observations are correct, Mr. Birks, and those who concur in his conclusions, ought to, and must, in consistency with their own principles, amend the 5th, 6th, and 9th of the foregoing maxims, which he states to be among those which have prevailed in what he styles Protestant exposition; and when that is conceded, it will be found that the maxims which they will then hold to be correct, with the exception of that of the two woes relating to the Saracens and Turks, are consistent with every line which we have written; and we shall have no longer to complain, that while they admit maxims and principles wholly subversive of the systems of interpretation which they are labouring to uphold, they take the advantage of classifying themselves with the highly and deservedly respected authors and upholders of those systems.

And here we would call attention to certain principles and doctrines which are generally admitted to

be well-founded Scripture truths, among Christians in the present day, but which, it must be obvious, were either not admitted, or, if admitted, are not to be found holding the prominent position they ought to have held in the writings of those learned divines, with whom originated the system of interpretation of the Apocalypse which we condemn. These principles are the key-stone of the system of interpretation which we advocate; and the non-recognition of them as leading and important truths, on which all interpreters of prophecy must rest, has, we have no doubt, been the main cause of the darkness which has so long pervaded the Book of Revelations.

1st. The restoration of the Jews as a nation, and in covenant with God, at the close of the present dispensation, and previous to the second advent.

2nd. The pre-millennial advent of Christ to reign over the kingdom of Israel for 1,000 years.

3rd. That the various systems of apostasy and infidelity which pervade the world, will issue in the manifestation of an individual, who will be the visible head of a concentration and consummation of open and avowed iniquity, and who, with his rebel followers, will be destroyed by the Lord at his second coming.

These are the truths which have guided us in our interpretations of the Apocalypse; and to all the principles of Mede, Newton, Faber, Elliott, &c., as far as they are not inconsistent with these, we fully subscribe. And it will be found, that those who concur with us in the adoption of these principles as Scripture truths, must also concur with us in reject-

ing some, at all events, of the expositions of those authors. Such being the state of the case, we are happy to find that Mr. Birks, who we believe to be the advocate of the views of a large class of pious and inquiring Christians, agrees with us in each and all of them. With respect to the first, he thus writes:—"Hence the events of the apostolic age, before the temple was destroyed, and those of the last times, *when the nation shall re-appear in a covenant character*, like two mountain ranges, are seen blended together; and the times of the Gentiles, though much longer than both, are left obscured and almost hidden from view in the valley between them."* In fact, the latter chapters of the prophecy of Ezekiel, and several other prophecies in the Scriptures, establish this principle beyond all doubt. As to the second, his concurrence is expressed in his exposition of the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew, in which he admits that the prophecy of the *second advent*, which had received a figurative construction from Bishop Newton and many others, is to be taken in *its natural and literal meaning*.† And as to the third principle, we have already shewn that he interprets the prophecy respecting the "Man of Sin" in conformity with our view of it.

Now, such being the principles of Mr. Birks, and of the large and influential body of Christians who concur with him, and such being likewise the principles from which the interpretation we advocate naturally springs, we do not despair of their ultimate

* "Elements of Prophecy," p. 235.

† Ibid, p. 195.

conversion to that system of exposition which looks to future events for a fulfilment, or, at all events, a *complete* fulfilment of many of the most important prophecies of holy writ. Extreme opinions have been advocated by some of those writers with whom we have been classed, which have naturally deterred cautious Christians from taking a step in the same direction; but it ought to be borne in mind, that the most precious truths and doctrines of Christianity have been frequently neutralized and smothered for a season by the excesses of some of their first promulgators and expounders. Thus Mr. Maitland, Dr. Todd, and some others of the same school, who have done much to restore correct views of prophecy, have carried the principles of Futurist exposition to an extent, not only wholly untenable, but calculated, we fear, to shake the Scripture evidences of divine inspiration to the very foundation. With the strictures of Mr. Birks on the exposition of the prophecies of Daniel by these authors, we, to a great extent, concur. He has, with a few exceptions, established the primary fulfilment of the greater portion of those prophecies beyond question; and so far his “Elements of Prophecy” is of real value. How far he has succeeded in his general object of extinguishing the labours of those who have maintained the prophecies of the Apocalypse to be, for the most part, unfulfilled, remains to be seen. This brings us back to such of his arguments as affect the principles on which we have founded our inquiries, and to which alone we shall here turn our attention.

The arguments against the interpretation of the

Apocalypse as being for the most part a fulfilled prophecy, derived from the obscurity of the supposed fulfilment, and the variety and discordancy of the various expositions, has been met and encountered in the following manner:—The proposition is denied “that every fulfilled prophecy must be clearer than those which are unfulfilled;” and, on the contrary, Mr. Birks insists that they may, and many of them must be, more obscure than those which have not been accomplished, “if one class of them only are given as a sign to the unbeliever, and others are designed exclusively for the Church, to exercise the wisdom and humility of her members, and unfold the deeper mysteries of Divine Providence;” and he then enumerates a variety of fulfilled prophecies from the New Testament, as to the mode of the fulfilment of which there have been controversies. With respect to these, we need only at present observe, that they are all of them detached and isolated prophecies—that is to say, not forming part of a *series of prophetic events*; and without entering into a minute investigation of the causes of obscurity in each of them separately, we shall merely state that the difficulties will, on examination, be found to have their existence and origin in certain omissions, corruptions, or mistranslations of the Old Testament prophecies to which they are references; or, as Mr. Birks himself observes, “in the difficulties of grammar, phrase, style, or connexion; and the omission of circumstantial details;” or in the fulfilment not being complete.

Then again, as to the discordance of these inter-

preters, it is insisted, that by reason of the wide range of the prophecies, the number of distinct predictions, the symbolical language, and the typical allusions, the discordance is not greater than might have been expected; and it is asserted that there has been a general approach to a fixed interpretation. To this we can only reply, that what is here termed, "an approach to a fixed interpretation," will be found to be nothing more than an agreement among expositors, that certain items of a continuous and connected series of prophetic declarations are to be taken as accomplishments of certain events which have been recorded on the varied pages of history, though no two of the same expositors concur as to the fulfilment of the preceding or subsequent predictions of the same series. This reasoning will not appear very conclusive to any person who looks at the prophecy as admittedly a revelation of a continued series of events. They will not feel disposed to place much value on the concurrence of expositors with respect to the fulfilment of the fifth and sixth trumpet prodigies, when they find the same persons differing from each other as to the events which they respectively maintain to have been the fulfilment of the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets which preceded them—and that too, not only in their nature, but as to the time of their occurrence, by whole centuries. Thus, while Newton, Faber, and Cunningham, and Elliott more recently, concur as to the fulfilment of the fifth and sixth trumpets in the history of the Saracens and Turks, the Bishop explains the first four seals, by applying them to the

history of the Roman empire under Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, and Nerva, and the other seals to the state of the Empire during the subsequent period down to the accession of Dioclesian. According to Mr. Faber, the first four seals symbolize respectively the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's image, the fifth the suspension of persecution, and the sixth the transition from Paganism to Christianity. According to Mr. Cunningham, the first seal denotes the triumphant progress of the Gospel in the first and purest age of the Church, comprehending the first three centuries; the second, the progress of the same during the fourth and fifth centuries; and the sixth the final revolution that is to precede the second advent; while, according to Mr. Elliott, the opening of the first six seals commences at the close of the first century of the Christian era, and continues down to the days of Constantine. The same discordance exists in the interpretations of the first four trumpet prodigies. Why the fulfilment of these prophecies, if fulfilled, should not be as clearly stamped on the records of past events as those of the fifth and sixth trumpets are said to be, it would be difficult to suggest a reason.

But then it is rejoined, that the expositors who maintain the non-fulfilment of these prophecies, are equally discordant in their views as to what will constitute their fulfilment. But to this the reply is obvious, that a diversity of opinion with respect to an *unfulfilled* symbolic prophecy is naturally to be looked for, and is no evidence of the unsoundness of the principle that the predicted events are

still future; while, on the other hand, a diversity of opinion with respect to the meaning of a prophecy, where the issue is, *fulfilled or unfulfilled*, is strong evidence in favour of its being still unaccomplished. Concurrence among commentators as to the fact of a prophecy having been fulfilled, proves nothing, though a concurrence as to the events which formed the fulfilment, would be evidence of the prophecy having been fulfilled.

There is one more argument on this subject to which we shall allude. It is, that "some of these prophecies, or parts of them, are declared to be *sealed till the time of the end*. This of itself seems to imply that the knowledge of them would not at once be given to the Church, but gradually, in the latter times. Here we have a further explanation of the divergence of interpreters. The divine purpose of revealing the prophecies by degrees could not otherwise have been fulfilled."* This will appear to be a strange conclusion, when we turn to the portion of Scripture from which the text relied on is taken. It will be found in the last chapter of the prophecies of Daniel, immediately after, and referring to, the things "noted in the Scripture of truth;" and Mr. Birks not only admits, but insists, that the meaning and intent of the greater part of that prophecy is so clear and unambiguous, that even infidels have acknowledged that the events of history have been a clear fulfilment of them. There was, therefore, no sealing up of this portion of the prophecy; and the remain-

* "Elements of Prophecy," p. 11.

ing portion (the obscurity of which, and the diversity of opinion which prevails as to the fulfilment, affords a strong contrast to the lucidity of the previous part) is, we contend, on that account, still unfulfilled. That part is, therefore, sealed up, and will continue so till the fulfilment at the time of the end. Consequently, the foregoing text has a tendency to establish the reverse of the proposition for which it was brought forward, inasmuch as one part of the prophecy, which is admittedly fulfilled, cannot be said to be sealed up, and no reason can be assigned why the remaining part should be sealed, except that it is unfulfilled, and will remain so until the time of the end. But the truth is, that the text refers to the prophecies of Daniel alone, and is wholly inapplicable to those of the Apocalypse—nay more, there is a passage in the Apocalypse to the contrary effect: “And he saith unto me, seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.” The true interpretation of the passage in Daniel would appear to be, that the vision, or “scripture of truth,” being an exclusive revelation to the Jews, the sealing up of the prophecy implied a sealing up from them alone until the time of the end, when their blinded eyes shall be opened to the truths of Scripture. This we conceive to be the correct meaning of the passage cited above, and is, therefore, very far from affording support to the proposition built upon it. On the other hand, the prophecies of the Apocalypse were never intended to be sealed up from the Church, either before or after the fulfilment.

Independent of the inconclusiveness of the forego-

ing strictures of Mr. Birks on the reasoning in question, we shall find further corroboration of its force from the consideration of the argument itself in connexion with some of the admitted principles of our opponents. The argument, when correctly stated, is to this effect—that as the concurrence of expositors as to the meaning and purport of certain prophecies, is the strongest and most conclusive evidence of the same having been fulfilled, it follows that the discordance of the same expositors as to the meaning and purport of certain other prophecies, is strong and convincing proof that the same are unfulfilled. This argument is simple, and so easy to be understood and appreciated, that it will require more conclusive reasons than any we have hitherto read, to convince the unprejudiced Christian inquirer of its futility and weakness. As respects Mr. Birks, and those who concur in his views, the argument presents itself in a still stronger light, inasmuch as his own leading argument in favour of the prophecies of Daniel having been fulfilled, in confutation of the views of Maitland and Todd, is founded on the unvarying concurrence of all expositors, both Christian and Jewish, as to the events which fulfilled them. Add to this the special analogy that Mr. Birks asserts, and which we admit, to exist between the visions of Daniel and those of the Apocalypse, and we may conclude, that as the visions of Daniel are predictions of historical events, which, in coming to pass, shed a light on the prophecy that disclosed the meaning and purport even to infidels, so ought we to expect that the visions of the Apocalypse, admittedly

analogous in their nature to those of Daniel, should, when fulfilled, carry the same conviction to the mind, and shine forth on the pages of Scripture as evidences of the foreknowledge and goodness of the Divine Author. This admitted analogy between the visions of Daniel and those of the Apocalypse, shows the impropriety of his reasoning with respect to the obscurity of unfulfilled prophecy, deduced from a collection of isolated and detached prophecies in the Gospels and Epistles, inasmuch as no analogy can be said to exist between such predictions and the connected chain of visions in the Apocalypse; while, on the contrary, there is an obvious analogy between the visions of Daniel (in the fulfilment of which, as far as they have been fulfilled, no obscurity exists) and those of the Apocalypse. So that, from his own principles, he ought to have extracted a conclusion directly the reverse of that which he has stated.

On the same grounds stands the argument derived from the unsuitableness of the predictions of the Apocalypse, if fulfilled, to convict or confute the infidel. The fulfilment of Daniel's prophecies, if they failed to convict, have so far confuted infidels, that the most acute and subtle of the writers of that school have been driven to the desperate and unsustainable alternative of insisting that the prophecies were written subsequent to the event. From this circumstance, it has been argued, that they could not have been intended to confute infidels. But we contend, that when an infidel has been driven to put forward and maintain an untenable and false proposition, he has exhibited the strongest evidence of the ten-

dency and suitableness of the prophecies to convince him. They cannot withhold their assent to the fulfilment of the prophecies of Daniel ; but to challenge their assent to the fulfilment of the Apocalyptic visions, is but to expose that priceless treasure of the Church to obloquy and reproach ; and it may well be retorted by them, that if the divine origin of Daniel's prophecies is to be proved by their fulfilment in the events which have occurred, why is not the divine origin of the Apocalypse, if it is likewise a fulfilled prophecy, manifestly and undeniably reflected from the events which have happened ?

The leading objection which has been urged against the Futurist view of the Apocalypse, is founded on the erroneous supposition, that, according to it, there is no prophecy contained therein of any of the events which were to befall the Church between the ascension of the Saviour and the last generation of the present dispensation. The contents of the following pages will prove that such a principle is neither the foundation, nor the result, of the scheme of interpretation which we have been unfolding. True it is, that we have treated the visions of the seals and trumpets as symbolic of events still in the womb of futurity. We have traced them, by the light of the Old Testament prophecies, to be a series of predictions of the purification of the Jewish Church in the latter days of its restoration, previous to the full acknowledgment and reception of their Saviour and their King by Judah and Israel ; but as to the remaining portion of the book, commencing with the twelfth chapter, we shall find it to be a revelation of the

trials, vicissitudes, and final purification of the Gentile branch of the Church, and, as such, to contain prophecies affecting it during the whole period comprised between the first and second advent of the Lord. It will, in fact, be found to be a continuation and expansion of the prophecies of Daniel respecting the last of the four Gentile kingdoms, viz., the Roman dynasty, in all its phases, down to the time of its being struck and crushed by the stone of Israel, which shall thenceforth fill the whole earth. It is, therefore, unnecessary, as far as our scheme of interpretation is concerned, to encounter that class of objections to the Apocalypse being an unfulfilled prophecy.

We concur in many of the observations which have been brought forward, as to the improbability of the divine Author of this book having omitted the times of the Gentiles from his final revelations to the Church of the pages of futurity. The "mystery of iniquity" which began to work in the days of the Apostles, is there pourtrayed in characters, some of which even the members of that apostate system have been constrained to recognise and acknowledge; and though Mr. Burgh, Mr. Govett, Mr. Kelly, and others, have struggled to cast wholly into futurity the fulfilment of the prophecies to which we allude, viz., the symbol of the Scarlet Whore riding on the ten-horned Beast, yet it is obvious that their reasonings and conclusions are anything but satisfactory to themselves, and altogether without a reasonable foundation, as we hope to be able to show hereafter.

Before concluding these introductory observations, we shall call attention to what we conceive to be the

only remaining subject of controversy between Mr. Birks and ourselves—we allude to the exposition of the prophecy of the Mount of Olives. Mr. Birks did not fail to see the great importance of our interpretation of that passage of Scripture, in supporting and establishing the non-fulfilment of the events pourtrayed in the imagery of the seals and trumpets; and, therefore, it became necessary, for the maintenance of his position, to refute that exposition, as far as it was practicable. To what extent he has succeeded will soon appear.

The interpretation of this prophecy which appears to have generally prevailed in the Church from the time of the Reformation until a very recent period, was, that it had been fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; and the expositors give a figurative construction to the closing revelation of the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, so as to confine that prediction likewise to the same event. Such were the views of Bishop Newton and many others; and these Mr. Birks, notwithstanding his reverence and regard for the opinions of authors of that school, very properly abandons, as being a violent and unnatural gloss on the closing words of the prophecy. Indeed, subscribing, as he does, to the doctrine of the personal pre-millennial advent, it was wholly impossible for him to uphold them. On the other hand, he was unwilling to adopt the view, which we have advocated, of the whole prophecy being unfulfilled, and still remaining to be accomplished in the proceedings of the Antichrist with the Jews in the latter days, as

foretold by Daniel, inasmuch as the analogy between this prophecy and that of the seals was too obvious to be encountered or explained away. He, accordingly, adopts a middle course, and has endeavoured to maintain that the former part of the prophecy, inclusive of the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the holy place, was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; and that the remaining part is unfulfilled, and to be accomplished at the second advent.

Now, the leading predicted event is the setting up of "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, in the holy place;" and our Saviour warns the witnesses of that event to flee from Judea forthwith, adding:—"For there shall be *great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.* And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Our Saviour then, after warning them against false Christs which should then prevail, adds:—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened," &c. Now, Mr. Birks affirms that the great tribulation, which he admits commenced in the sacking of Jerusalem by Titus, was shortened or suspended for the elect's sake, and is again to be renewed at the period of their restoration in the latter days. He says:—"The woe should be stopped short, before its severity should have exterminated the whole people. It should be resumed and completed only when the elect among the Gentiles should be gathered in, and their long dispersion, and the provocation of them to

jealousy, by the long course of Gentile privileges, should, as moral antecedents, have prepared the way for the conversion and repentance of a large remnant, when the last dregs of the woe should descend on them in the last days.”* Not to say anything of the unseemly and unnatural gap which this exposition leaves in the middle of the prophecy, of 1800 years at the least, and for which, or a similar principle of construction, he has, with some inconsistency, condemned Dr. Todd and others, we shall prove that the interpretation is wholly untenable.

The great tribulation here spoken of, is admitted by Mr. Birks to be the same as that spoken of by Daniel at the commencement of his twelfth chapter; inasmuch, as it is, in both places, described as *the greatest* that should ever befall the Jews, or any other nation. In the prophecy of Daniel, it follows immediately after, what Mr. Birks admits to be, a prediction of the Antichrist sitting in the restored temple at Jerusalem, and claiming to be the object of a divine adoration,† and is expressly connected with, and followed by the prediction of the first resurrection of the saints, or the second advent of the Saviour. The words of Daniel are these :—“And he (the Antichrist) shall plant the tabernacles of his palace be-

* “Elements of Prophecy,” p. 219.

† In his comments on this passage, Mr. Birks observes :—“It may be inferred, from a careful comparison of several Scriptures, that at this time the temple, described in Ezekiel, will have been built, and that here this fierce and mighty king shall seat himself as a sovereign, and claim to be the object of a divine adoration.”—The Two Later Visions of Daniel, p. 337.

tween the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," &c. Thus, we have it admitted, that in the prophecy of Daniel there is a prediction of the Antichrist sitting in the restored temple at Jerusalem, followed by a prediction of "the great tribulation," and of the second advent—while in the prophecy of our Saviour, there is a prediction of the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the holy place, followed by the same prediction of the great tribulation, and of the second advent; and yet Mr. Birks refuses to acknowledge, that the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the holy place, is the same event as the setting up of the Antichrist, as the object of a divine adoration, in the restored temple; and prefers to contend, that "the great tribulation" commenced with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus—since which, nearly eighteen centuries have already elapsed—thus making two great tribulations to which the Jews are to be exposed, separated from each other by eighteen hundred years, at the least, and each of them the greatest which was ever to befall them. Have the Jews suffered no tribulation since the destruction of Jerusalem? Has not their whole history been a series of tribulations, at

different times and in different places, from that date to the present time ; and if so, is it not a contradiction in terms, to insist that their *greatest tribulation* commenced 1800 years since, ceased, and is to be resumed at some still future period ? How Mr. Birks could have imposed such a construction, not only on himself, but on others of understanding in these matters, it is difficult to conceive ; and that too, when he would not have violated any principle or doctrine which he holds, or distorted any sentence from its obvious and simple meaning, in adopting the view of the whole prophecy being unfulfilled. This latter view would not, however, have suited his predetermination to uphold, what he terms the Protestant interpretation of the Apocalypse, and must, therefore, be got rid of. He admits that “the infidel Antichrist shall yet take his seat in the restored temple ;” and if so, why hesitate to apply to that event the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the holy place here predicted ? And he also admits, that at the same period, the Jews shall be subjected to their greatest tribulation, which shall be followed immediately by the second advent ; and if so, what is the necessity for resorting to the unnatural division of the greatest tribulation that will ever occur in the history of the world, into two events, separated from each other by a long interval of time, and distinct as respects the individuals which are to be the subjects of it ?

But this is not the only impropriety of construction into which he has been driven, to uphold this novel interpretation ; for, in order to evade the natural explanation of the meaning of the parable of the

fig-tree, and the declaration of the Saviour, "Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away until *all these things* be fulfilled," as importing that all the events of the prophecy were to occur within the period of a single generation, he maintains that the phrase, "all these things," refers to the former part of the prediction, that is to say, to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and that the subsequent verse, "of that day and hour knoweth no man," refers to the latter portion of the prediction, viz., the restoration of the Jews and the second advent.* Many inconsistencies might be shewn to flow from such a construction, some of which have been anticipated by the author himself; but we shall call attention to one only, to which he has not adverted, and which appears to us to be insurmountable. After describing the second advent, and the sending of the angels to call in his elect, the Saviour adds—"Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see *all these things*, know that it (he) is near, even at the doors. Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till *all these things* be fulfilled." We thus see that the phrase "*all these things*," occurs twice in this passage; and, as a matter of course, must bear the same signification in both places. But in the first place where it occurs, it obviously denotes, either all of the events predicted in the prophecy, or those which are more immediately connected with

* "Elements of Prophecy," p. 230.

the second advent. How, therefore, can Mr. Birks confine it, in the latter sentence, to the events which are predicted in the former part of the prophecy alone, and removed (according to his interpretation) from the second advent by the whole Christian dispensation, unless, indeed, he contends, that when the Saviour spoke of his being near, even at the door, he alluded to the figurative advent in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and not the personal advent which he had been describing in the immediately preceding passage of the prophecy in question?

We have carefully examined, and reflected on, the foregoing strictures on our exposition of this prophecy, and we trust with a sincere desire to be convinced of the truth; and we have arrived at the conclusion, that it is substantially correct. The leading, and we may say, the only arguments of weight which have been put forward against the exposition we advocate, are, that our Saviour cannot be intended, under the circumstances of the delivery of the prophecy, to have alluded to the second destruction of Jerusalem foretold in Zechariah; and that it is altogether inconsistent to construe the prediction of the setting up of the abomination of desolation, spoken of by St. Matthew and St. Mark, as referring to a different event from that predicted in St. Luke, as to take place when Jerusalem should be seen to be surrounded with armies, inasmuch as the three prophecies were obviously delivered on the same occasion, and at the same period. Now, admitting that these three prophecies are but different versions of one and the same discourse of the Saviour,

there is nothing inconsistent in the supposition, that one of the Evangelists should have omitted some of the circumstances recorded by the other two, and *vice versa*. On the contrary, there are many instances of such an occurrence in the Gospels ; and, moreover, a reason can be readily suggested for such an occurrence in this particular instance, as will presently appear.

Let us suppose that the Saviour, after his prediction of the total destruction of the temple, at which he and his Disciples had been gazing, was questioned by them as to the period of the destruction of the temple and his second coming, as was the fact—is it not manifest to any person who reads the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah, that it was that plain and unequivocal prophecy of the sacking of Jerusalem, *which was to be followed by the appearing of the Lord himself on the Mount of Olives to fight against his enemies*, which suggested to the Disciples the inquiry, “When shall these things be, and what shall be the *sign of thy coming* ?” No other destruction of Jerusalem is predicted, at all events, in such unambiguous terms ; and what, therefore, more natural than the conclusion, that it was that prophecy which suggested the adding to the inquiry respecting the destruction of the temple, the further inquiry respecting the coming of the Lord ; and if the inquiry was made with this feeling in the minds of the Disciples, as it undoubtedly was, what more natural than that the Saviour, who knew their thoughts, should have replied in such terms, as to convey all the information that such an inquiry could call forth ? In short, is it not consis-

tent with divine goodness, that he should have unfolded to them, in his reply, not only the destruction of Jerusalem, which was shortly to be carried into effect by the Romans, but also that destruction which was connected with his second advent, and which alone was prominent in the minds of his inquiring Disciples at the time? Such we conceive to have been the extent of the Lord's revelation, co-extensive with the inquiry, and, as such, comprising in it predictions of both destructions of the holy city—the first, because the temple which was then destroyed, was before him, and had originated the inquiry; and the second, because the Disciples naturally associated it with the coming of the Lord. And had the Saviour omitted either the one or the other of those events, his information, having regard to the minds of the inquirers and their inquiry, would have been incomplete.

If such, then, be the true state of the case, there is no difficulty in the conclusion, that while the Evangelists St. Matthew and St. Mark recorded that part alone of the divine discourse which spoke of the latter destruction of Jerusalem, St. Luke, whose Gospel was supplementary, and written, moreover, for the edification and comfort of the Eastern converts, records that part of the discourse which alludes to the first destruction by the Romans, which had been omitted by the other Evangelists, but in which those, for whom principally his Gospel was written, were most interested. It is unnecessary to show how frequently the Apostles differ in their versions of the same events, and the same discourses, without contradicting each other; and how many instances are

to be found in the Gospels, of omissions by one of the Evangelists being supplied by another. The language in which our Lord conveys the prediction of the catastrophe to Jerusalem, is almost identical in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, which is altogether different from that of St. Luke. In the two former, it is described as the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the holy place, and in the latter, as Jerusalem being compassed with armies ; and such being the case, surely there is less impropriety in concluding, that our Lord spoke of different transactions on the same occasion, than that he spoke of the same transactions in different, and wholly dissimilar, phrases.

In confirmation of this view, we may observe, that the language of St. Luke shows that the destruction of Jerusalem, to which he refers, is a different one from that referred to by the other Evangelists. All of them commenced the prophecy with a description of nation rising against nation, wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes ; and while it appears from the versions of St. Matthew and St. Mark, that the setting up of the abomination of desolation is to follow these portents, the language of St. Luke leads to the opposite conclusion, viz., that the surrounding of Jerusalem with armies, of which he speaks, is to precede the same ; for, after the prediction of wars, pestilences, famines, and earthquakes, he proceeds—“ *But before all these things,*” &c. ; and warning his hearers, that when they should see Jerusalem compassed with armies, they should flee to the mountains. To these might be added many other internal evidences of the correctness of this view ; but as most of

them have been adduced in our previous treatise, it is unnecessary to recapitulate them.

For these reasons, we still adhere to our former interpretation of the prophecy of our Lord, as recorded by St. Matthew and St. Mark, being still future in its accomplishment ; and for the same reasons, we are also confirmed in our exposition of the obviously parallel symbolical predictions of the seals and trumpets, being also unfulfilled. That section of the Apocalypse is, as we have already explained it, a revelation of the purification of the Jewish branch of God's Church in the days of its restoration and reconciliation, in a covenant state, to God, viz., the last of the seventy weeks—while the part of the same book which is about to occupy our attention, is a prophetic picture of the trials and purification of the Gentile branch of the Church, which is inserted parenthetically, in the course of God's dealings with his people Israel, between their expulsion from, and restoration to, his favour. Accordingly, treating, as it does, of Gentile transactions, we shall find the subject matter of it to be an expansion of Daniel's prophetic history of the last of the four Gentile kingdoms upon earth, which were to occupy the government of the world, from the period of the departure of the kingdom from Israel in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, until the restoration and expansion of the same at the advent of the Messiah, to reign over them as "an holy nation and a kingdom of priests," supreme over all the dynasties of the world. The Roman empire, in all its forms, from the first to the second advent of Christ, who, under the figure of the stone made without hands, is

to crush it for ever, will appear on the scene. We shall find in it ROME PAGAN, under the form of the seven-headed and ten-horned Beast, *with the crowns of dominion on its heads*; ROME PAPAL, in the form of the Scarlet Whore, riding on the same Beast in a quiescent state, *without any crowns either on its heads or its horns*; and ROME ANTICHRIST, or Rome in its last form, under the rule of the Antichrist, the king of ten kings, and reigning through, and over, them, symbolized by the same Beast *with crowns on his ten horns*; and the names of blasphemy, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," on his heads.

In this view, the Apocalypse will be found to be a natural and consistent expansion of the prophecies of Daniel, to which all admit that it bears a strong resemblance; and while it unfolds the destiny of Daniel's own people, who are the objects of his first solicitude and inquiries, it, at the same time, discloses what remained in St. John's time, to be accomplished of the history of the Gentile dispensation of the four kingdoms, which he (Daniel) was the first to announce to the world. And while, on the one hand, this exposition is not open to the leading, and well-founded, objections of one class of expositors, that in the exposition of their opponents, the Romish apostasy is passed by, and the transactions of the present dispensation omitted from the pages of this last revelation of God's will to his Church; so, on the other hand, those who belong to the other class of expositors, cannot complain of the absence of a revelation of the final consummation of iniquity—the Anti-

christ, who is to arise in the latter days, to persecute the saints, and to be extinguished by the Saviour, when he comes in the clouds of heaven to succour and to save his oppressed and suffering people.

The object and order of the predicted events are defined and intelligible; and though, in the details of what is unfulfilled, obscurities must naturally exist, yet as the time of the fulfilment approaches—when the threatening clouds of the latter days are gathering around, the Apocalyptic revelations shall become, to the watchful student of prophecy, as a light shining in a dark place, to warn him of those things that are coming upon the earth, and to prepare him for the conflict with the enemy of his soul.

CHAPTER I.

THE CLOSE OF THE JEWISH, AND BIRTH OF THE
CHRISTIAN, DISPENSATION.

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.”—GAL. iv. 4.

HAVING, in our previous treatise of “The Latter Days of the Jewish Church and Nation,” accompanied the Jewish people through the process of refinement and purification which has been revealed to us in the portion of the Apocalypse included between the sixth and eleventh chapters, and having established them in their promised inheritance, in the full and complete enjoyment of all the glorious privileges and blessings which have been poured out in the pages of divine inspiration, from the days of Abraham down to those of the Prophet Malachi, we now approach the study and interpretation of the immediately succeeding portion of the blessed revelation of God’s will with respect to his Church. We may recollect, that from the time of our Saviour’s departure from earth, and the simultaneous flight of the outcast Jewish Church into the wilderness, where she remains until the latter days, which are to commence

with the one remaining of the seventy weeks of her duration as a Church, previous to her triumphant glorification, another channel of mercy was opened in the crucified Redeemer, through which the loving kindness of God, in bringing a chosen people to himself, was to be poured during the present dispensation. Another Church, or more properly speaking, a new branch of the primitive Church was formed, of which the first members were the Apostles and other Jewish converts. These were denominated by St. Paul "the remnant according to the election of grace;" and into the body of which they formed the nucleus, have the Gentiles been grafted, becoming thereby partakers with them of the root and fatness of the olive tree; or, in other words, of the blessings and privileges which are entailed by promise on the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh.

Thus, in the revelation of the purposes of God, with respect to his Church, it is to be expected, that some disclosure should be made of the vicissitudes and trials of that branch of it which has existed in the world since the cessation and temporary extinction of that which was his visible Church from the days of Abraham down to the death of the Saviour. And as we have traced in the former chapters of this book of "the Revelation," the various trials to which that previous visible Church is to be subjected, when it shall be again restored, and in covenant with their God, so we humbly trust to be enabled by the Spirit of all truth, to unfold in the mystical prophecies of the subsequent chapters—1st, the trials and persecutions to which the Christian branch of the Church

has been, since the departure of the Saviour, and will be, until his coming again, exposed, for those purposes of refinement and purification which are necessary for the perfecting of all that is human ; and 2nd, the glorious manifestation of the triumph and power of the Church of God in the millennial dispensation, after that the seed of Abraham shall have looked for mercy and deliverance to him whom they have pierced, and mourned with contrite spirit, until he shall have returned to pour forth for them their long suspended blessings ; and change their heartfelt sighs and lamentations into praises of thanksgiving and rejoicing.

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars : and she being with child, cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven ; and behold a great red Dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth ; and the Dragon stood before the Woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up to God and to his throne.”—Rev. xii. 1–5.

The foregoing scene, together with the remainder of the twelfth chapter, are introductory of what we consider to be the subject matter of the revelation, viz., the Christian Church ; and it, therefore, commences with the very root and origin of it. The Woman, who appears “clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars,” is emblematical of the Jewish

Church immediately previous to the birth of the Saviour. This may be collected from other parts of Scripture, where we find that Church represented under the figure of a woman, Is. liv. 1 ; and that the sun, moon, and twelve stars with which she is enveloped, are symbolical of the Jewish people, appears from the dream of Joseph, which is recorded in the thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis, where the whole family of Israel, with the exception of Joseph, are symbolized by the sun, moon, and eleven stars—and, consequently, inclusive of Joseph, by the sun, moon, and twelve stars. “And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, behold I have dreamed a dream more ; and behold, the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it his father, and to his brethren : and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, what is this dream that thou hast dreamed ? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth ?”

Thus, the Woman denoting a Church, and the surrounding emblems the Jewish people, we can have no difficulty in recognising, in the symbol before us, the Jewish Church—which, the fulness of her time having come, is introduced to our notice as travailing with child, and paining to be delivered. This child, of which she is subsequently represented as having been delivered, is manifestly Christ the Saviour, who is about to come into the world in fulfilment of the prophecy, “unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ;” but whose identity is confirmed by the subsequent description of his birth, where he is described

as one "who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron," which is the authority and power conferred on the Saviour, and on him alone.—Ps. ii. 9; Rev. xix. 15.

The other wonder which appears on the scene in the shape of a great Red Dragon, is, as we are informed in the ninth verse, "the old serpent called the Devil and Satan;" who, for the promotion of his machinations against all that is good, assumes various forms in the world, and who is here represented as having "seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." This seven-headed and ten-horned monster occupies a conspicuous place in the prophecies which we are about to consider. It has been interpreted by the great majority of expositors who have written on the subject, as symbolical of the Roman power, the fourth of Daniel's Gentile kingdoms on earth. In this view we concur, though we differ, in some respects, as to the explanations which have been given of the heads and horns. Into this, however, we shall not enter in this place, but reserve our observations on the subject, until we come to the consideration of the same Beast, as presented to us in the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation. At present, it will only be necessary to state, that we have no hesitation in concurring with the generality of expositors, that the seven-headed and ten-horned monster, as here presented to our view, is emblematical of the constituent parts of the Roman Empire, as it existed at the period of our Saviour's birth. Indeed, the explanation given by the angel of the same, or a similar Beast, in Rev. xvii., precludes, as we shall presently see, any other conclusion.

Thus, the scene before us pourtrays Satan, under the form of the Roman power, standing before the Woman, ready to devour her child as soon as it should be born. This was the exact position of affairs at the time of the Saviour's birth; when we are told that Herod, the Roman governor of Judea, being troubled, consulted the chief priests and scribes respecting the locality of the birth of Christ, and also called the wise men to make inquiries from them on the same subject, with the view of destroying him as soon as he should come into the world. From this fate, however, though Judea was deluged with the blood of the innocents,* he was rescued by the special interposition of Providence; and after performing his work on earth, while the same Dragon was still watching to devour him, he "was caught up unto God and his throne."

"And the Woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days."—Rev. xii. 6.

It may be recollected, that in our comments on the previous chapters of the Revelations, we traced the meaning and object of the Apocalyptic dates, viz., that they were not introduced as designatory of any definite periods of time, but to serve as indices to di-

* The stars of heaven, are, in this place, emblematical of the Jewish people, as appears from the first verse of this chapter and our interpretation of it. It would seem, therefore, that the revelation of the Dragon drawing the third part of the stars of heaven, and casting them to the earth, is emblematical of the slaying of the Innocents by Herod.

rect us to the typical event in the Old Testament, which, having been typical, was, therefore, to some extent, illustrative of the antitypical event revealed in the Apocalypse. Thus, in this view of the purport of these dates, we traced the typical event of the fifth trumpet portents to have been the five months' flood in the days of Noah; and that of the sixth trumpet portents, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, whereby we were led to ascertain more distinctly the object and effect of those revealed visitations.* In the same manner, we traced that the intent of the forty-two months' treading down of the holy city by the Gentiles, and of the equal and synchronous period of 1,260 days' preaching of the two witnesses, was to indicate the period of the present dispensation,† during which the Jewish Church is to be outcast; or, like its type, Elijah, in the wilderness for three years and six months, or 1,260 days. In the same manner, in the verse under our immediate consideration, the sojourn in the wilderness of the Woman, or the Jewish Church, for 1,260 days, commencing with the ascension of Christ, leads us to the same type of Elijah in the desert, and shows us that the imagery discloses the period of the outcast, or wilderness state, of the Jewish Church; and which Scripture has taught us is to continue during the times of the Gentiles, or until the close of the present dispensation, "blindness in part having happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."‡

* "The Latter Days," pp. 217-224. † Ibid, 249-252.

‡ Primasius, who wrote in the fifth century, appears to have

We may also remark, that the language of the Revelation, in some degree, confirms our assumption, that the sojourn of Elijah in the wilderness was the type of the event here predicted ; for we are told that God sent him to hide himself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan, where he had prepared for him the necessary means of sustenance, in having commanded the ravens to feed him there ; and, in the verse before us, the Woman is described as having “ fled into the wilderness, where she *hath* a place prepared of God, that they should *feed her there* a thousand two hundred and three score days.” It may not be unworthy of observation, as corroborative of the foregoing interpretation, that while the Evangelist describes all the previous imagery of the Revelation in the past tense, he does not, in this verse, write that the Woman *had* a place prepared of God in the wilderness for her, but that “ *she hath* a place prepared of God ;” as if he were describing an event

held a similar opinion, that these Apocalyptic dates of forty-two months (1,260 days), or the time, times, and a half, were intended to designate the period of the Christian dispensation. He observes on Rev. xii. 6—“ By that number of days, which makes three years and six months, he denotes in this place also all the times of Christianity from the commencement to the end of the preaching of Christ.” And again, in his explanation of the forty-two months, in Rev. xi. 2, he observes : “ Numerus mensium non novissimam tantum persecutionem significat, sed etiam Christianitatis tempus omne significat.”—La Bigne Bibl. tom. i. col. 1411–1417. Primasius does not, however, appear to have arrived at this conclusion by the same process of reasoning by which we have been led to it ; nor does he refer to the three years and a-half abode of Elijah in the wilderness.

that was in process of fulfilment at the period of his writing the Revelation. Also, in the fourteenth verse, the same event is spoken of in the present tense, viz., “And to the Woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, unto her place, where she *is nourished* for a time, and times, and half a time.”

Thus, in the foregoing vision, we are presented with a very simple and accurate picture of the birth of the Saviour—the Devil watching, under the form of the Roman empire, to devour him as soon as he should come into the world—and his ascension to heaven, to sit down with his Father on his throne. We now proceed to the next portion of the vision:—

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon: and the Dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore, rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”—Rev. xii. 7-12.

This scene, which all writers aver to be, according to their canon of interpretation, highly figurative, and enveloped in considerable obscurity and mystery, we

shall find, with the aid of Scripture, to be as simple and obvious a picture of the event which occurred immediately subsequent to the departure of the Saviour from earth, to take his seat at the right hand of God in heaven, as we have found that which immediately precedes it, to have been of the events which occurred previous to the ascension.

That Satan and his angels appeared in the presence of God in heaven during the old dispensation, is clearly and indisputably evidenced by several passages of Holy Writ. For instance, it is recorded in the book of Job, that, “on a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them.”—Job, i. 6. A similar event is likewise recorded in the prophecy of Zechariah—“And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?”—Zech. iii. 1, 2. From these testimonies it appears, that Satan was admitted into the presence of God; and it may also be collected from the same passages, that his object in taking his station in such a place as heaven, was to appear as *an adversary*, or *accuser*, against mankind; but more especially against God’s chosen people, the seed of Abraham after the flesh, “to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.” And in preferring his accusations against them before

the throne of God, he was effectually forbidding the fulfilment of the promises to them, for “by the works of the law could no flesh be justified.”—Gal. ii. 16. Thus, in the event recorded by Zechariah, in which God is represented as restoring Joshua to the priesthood, after the suspension of that office by the Babylonish captivity, Satan is introduced as opposing, or accusing, him in the presence of the Lord, with the view and intention of disqualifying him for that office. In the same manner, previous, and up to the time of, the redemption of the world, by the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, none of the faithful among the brethren, who had departed this life before the death of the Saviour, entered into the enjoyment of the blessings promised to the faithful; for the adversary was there to accuse them before the throne of God, and to demand, what none of human flesh could plead, the fulfilment of the will and commandments of God on earth. We are, therefore, informed by the Apostle, at the close of his catalogue of the faithful of the old dispensation, that they, having only “obtained a good report through faith, received not the promises of God; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”—Heb. xi. 39, 40. But when Christ had, as a circumcised Jew, performed every tittle of the law, in obeying its moral injunctions, and observing its ritual appointments—when he had offered up an infinite atonement to satisfy infinite justice, and sat down at the right hand of God, how could Satan any longer remain before the throne of his Fa-

ther in heaven? “Who is he that condemneth?—It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”—Rom. viii. 34. When the accusation was preferred, there was the Mediator in the presence of the Judge, to plead their performance of the law through him, and to present himself as the atonement for their sins; and heaven, therefore, being no longer a sphere for the exercise of his functions, he was, as revealed in the passage under our consideration, “cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him,” having been conquered, as we are told in the next passage, “by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of *their testimony*.”

Independent, moreover, of the foregoing reasons for concluding that Satan was cast out of heaven into the earth, as the consequence of the death and ascension of Christ, we have it declared by the Saviour himself, that on his reception up into glory, Satan was to be judged—was to be cast out of heaven, and to take up his peculiar abode upon earth, as the Prince of this World. For instance, speaking to the Disciples of his departure from them, and of the consequent advent of the Comforter, who was to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, he adds—“Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because *I go to the Father*; of judgment, because the *Prince of this World is judged*.”—John, xvi. 9–11. Again, speaking of his ascension, “Jesus answered them saying, the hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified.”—

John, xii. 23. In the succeeding verses of the same chapter, he alludes to the necessity for his death, and in the thirty-first verse, exclaims, as the consequence, "Now is the judgment of this world; *now shall the Prince of this World be cast out.*" Allusion is obviously made by him to the same events, when, previous to his conferring on the seventy "power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and *over all the power of the enemy,*" he said, "I beheld Satan as lightning falling from heaven."—Luke, x. 18. And, in fine, the advent of Satan to earth, as his peculiar sphere throughout this dispensation, is manifestly disclosed in the Saviour's declaration—"Hereafter I will not talk much with you; *for the Prince of this World cometh,* and hath nothing in me."—John, xiv. 30. Thus, we have the testimony of the Saviour himself, that at the time of his departure from earth to be received up into glory, Satan was to be judged—to be cast out of heaven—and to come to earth as peculiarly the Prince of this World, throughout this dispensation; at the close of which, when Christ shall return to earth, we shall find Satan deposed, and chained up in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years. And if such be Scripture truth, why should we look to any other event, or series of events, past, present, or to come, for the fulfilment of the prophetic vision before us; more especially, as it is confirmatory of the simple and obvious interpretation of the immediately preceding scene?

Michael, who is here introduced with his angels, as the victorious opponents of Satan, is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures as the guardian angel,

or prince of the Jews.—Dan. x. 13–21, and xii. 1. We find also, in St. Jude, that he contended with the Devil for the body of their lawgiver, Moses ; with what success, or for what object, does not distinctly appear. However, such being his character and office, we should be inclined to construe the host represented by Michael and his angels, as the body of the Jewish saints, who, as St. Paul says, received not the promise on their deaths, and who could only overcome their adversary by “the blood of the Lamb, and the *word of their testimony*,” which were the weapons used, as we are informed in their song of rejoicing for the victory.

“And when the Dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the Woman which brought forth the man child. And to the Woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.”—Rev. xii. 13, 14.

The first object of Satan's attack, on his being cast out of heaven into the earth, was the Woman, or the visible Church of God, which was the Jewish Church ; and she, we are told, was provided with eagle's wings wherewith to flee into the wilderness, where she now is, and is to remain until the expiration of a time, times, and half a time, which is generally admitted to designate a year, two years, and half a-year, viz., three years and a-half, which denotes, as we have already explained, the period of the present dispensation. The imagery of the eagle's wings leads us back to Exodus, xix. 4, Deut. xxxii. 11, where the flight of the Jewish Church into the wil-

derness of Egypt is described under a similar figure, which, in some degree, confirms our interpretation of the Woman, in this chapter, being emblematical of the Jewish Church.

“And the serpent cast out of his mouth water, as a flood, after the Woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the Woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.”—Rev. xii. 15, 16.

The next proceeding of the Serpent was that predicted by the Prophet Daniel, as to be accomplished at the time of the cutting off of the Messiah, the Prince, and the rejection of the Jews from being his people. “And after threescore and two weeks shall the Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the Prince that shall come (or the Prince’s future people, the Gentiles), shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with *a flood*, and unto the end of the war desolations shall be determined.”—Dan. ix. 26. The flood of hostile nations, which was, in fulfilment of this prophecy, poured against the Jews and their Church, was at the instigation of Satan. But instead of prevailing in his attempt to annihilate her utterly, she is, we are told in the Revelation before us, preserved in the wilderness by a merciful and long-suffering God, to be again, as we have fully explained, established and revealed, when the covenant shall be renewed with many for the one remaining of the seventy weeks of her duration (verse 27), which Daniel had been informed in the twenty-fourth verse of the same chapter, was to elapse

before that their transgressions should be finished, an end made of her sins, reconciliation made for iniquity, everlasting righteousness brought in, the vision and prophecy sealed up, and the Most Holy anointed—all which is to be effected by their reception of their Saviour at his second advent, at the close of the Gentile dispensation ; while the flood that was poured against her by the Serpent, expended its force on the Holy Land, which is here termed “the earth,” and which is figuratively described as having swallowed it up.

“And the Dragon was wroth with the Woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—Rev. xii. 17.

The Dragon, after this persecution of the Woman, or the Jewish Church, and her deliverance by having been removed into her present wilderness state, turns his wrath against the visible remnant of God’s Church which remained, and which is correctly termed, “the remnant of her (the Woman’s) seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ,” viz., the Apostles, and other early Jewish converts, who were denominated by St. Paul, “the remnant according to the election of grace.” This warfare of Satan against the remnant of early Christians, has never ceased ; and all who have been planted into that remnant, have shared in the persecutions of their enemy from that period down to the present ; and thus the war of the Dragon against the remnant of the Woman’s seed, is the war that he has been waging against the Christian Church, from the

days of the Apostles down to the present times, and which will continue until he shall be conquered and bound by the Lord himself at his second coming. Of these persecutions and trials, to which the Christian Church has been, and will continue to be, subjected at the hands of the Devil, or his instruments or agents, we shall find the succeeding chapters to be a revelation.

Thus the Apocalyptic vision which we have been considering is, as we premised, an introductory revelation to the refining trials and purgations to which the Christian branch of God's Church is to be subjected, being a figurative description of the occurrences which actually took place previous, and immediately subsequent to the ascension of the Saviour. His birth is almost literally depicted—the position of the Roman power, at the instigation of Satan, ready to devour him as soon as he should be born—and his ascension into heaven. We have then the casting out of Satan into the earth, where, as the Prince of the World, he exercises his powers of mischief and persecution; and the rejoicings of the faithful patriarchs on their entry into bliss, purchased by the mediatorial blood of the Saviour, but from which they had been theretofore debarred by the presence of their adversary and accuser. We are next presented with the persecution of the Jewish Church by the Serpent, and her escape into the wilderness, where she is to remain during the present dispensation. And lastly, we behold the Dragon turning his wrath against the remnant, which formed the nucleus of the Christian branch of God's Church, and which has ever since been the special object of the machinations and per-

secutions of the Prince of this World, and the enemy of all that is good.

It may be objected, that all the occurrences having been retrospective at the time of the revelation to the Evangelist, they could not with propriety form a part of a prophetic vision. Such an objection must be founded on the presumption that every part of the Apocalyptic vision must be wholly prospective. Admitting, however, that the leading object of this section of the vision was to disclose future events, it does not follow that, when a brief retrospect was requisite for the proper and complete introduction of the subject matter of the prophecy, as it was in this case for the introduction of the Christian, as distinguished from the Jewish branch of God's Church, the Almighty revealer was precluded from displaying to the eyes of his Evangelist, a particular, though symbolic, picture of its origin and early history, for the more complete elucidation of ensuing revelations. There is something, moreover, in the opening language, that is in some measure corroborative of a retrospective interpretation; for it does not commence, like the other parts of the prophetic vision which were admittedly unfulfilled at the period of the revelation, with a declaration of the Evangelist in the first person—"I saw," &c.; but it commences, in a somewhat different style from any other part of "the Revelation," in the past tense, viz., "there appeared," or "there was seen ($\omega\phi\theta\eta$) a great sign in heaven," &c.

It may seem surprising to many, that if this vision had been fulfilled before it was written, how it should have occurred that the fulfilment should not have

been recognised by expositors and the Christian world at large. To this we reply, that the general intent and meaning is so obvious, that few persons, we would venture to say, have read the passage in question, who have not, in the first instance, given it a construction consistent with the truth. The experience of Christian inquirers will, we feel persuaded, confirm this observation ; while, for the subsequent aberrations, there are several very obvious causes. For instance, as long as the present and future position of the Jewish Church remained unrecognised and unacknowledged, the figure of the flight of the Woman into the wilderness must have been involved in a mystery : and likewise, while the meaning and intent of the Apocalyptic dates were unexplained, the period of 1260 days, and the “time, times, and a half,” must have proved a stumblingblock to the true, and we may add obvious, interpretation of the scene before them. It was, in all probability, the latter of these causes which has misled so many interpreters, and drawn them into erroneous constructions. Had they taken into consideration the past, present, and future position of the Jewish Church, and adopted the view which we have endeavoured to sustain respecting the Apocalyptic dates, viz., that the 1260 days, or 42 months, or the “time, times and a half,” are but abstract indices of the indefinite period of the present dispensation, during which the Jewish Church continues, like its type Elijah, in the wilderness, unvisited by the dew of the Spirit, they could not have abandoned, what we cannot but consider, the obvious meaning of this section of the Apocalyptic vision.

Thus it was that Mr. Burgh, whose views on the subject of the past, present, and future position of the Jewish Church and nation appear to be most clear and correct, has been led into what we must consider an erroneous view of the meaning of this prophecy. After having treated the visions of the seals and trumpets as unfulfilled, he proceeds to the consideration of the imagery in question, and treats it as wholly future. His interpretation is, that the Woman is emblematical of the Jewish nation at the period of their restoration—not at the time of the nativity of the Saviour.* He thus passes over the entire period of the present dispensation, leaving it without any revelation in the Apocalypse, and explains the imagery of the parturition to adumbrate “the bringing in *again* of the first-begotten into the world,” and which he afterwards explains as the formation of Christ in their (the Jewish nation’s) hearts, the hope of glory. The seven-headed and ten-horned Dragon he interprets as Satan, clothed with the proper characteristics of the Prince of this World, seeking to effect the extermination of the Jewish people; and the abreption of the Child into heaven is, in his view of it, intended to convey the entire failure of this attempt to prevent the Kingdom of Christ. This explanation, which involves the necessary presumption that the vision is highly figurative, is, on that account, somewhat at variance with his own principle of literal interpretation; nor is it at all, as it appears to us, borne out by the

* Expos. of the Book of Rev. p. 230.

passages of Scripture on which he relies for elucidation.

His first remark is, that the Man child brought forth "was to rule all nations with a rod of iron;" and, therefore, could not pourtray the first coming of the Saviour, inasmuch as this was not the character in which Christ appeared at his first and literal birth into the world. This reasoning is built on the principle, that there would be an inconsistency in a prophecy of the first coming, if it included in it any of the characteristics or features of the second. But is it not a fact, that the generality of the prophecies of the first coming do contain many of the features that will be realised only at the second advent? Take, for example, the prophecy, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," &c.—Isaiah, ix. 6, 7. Is not this universally admitted to be a prophecy of the nativity? and yet the principal portion of it is yet to be fulfilled, at the return of the Saviour, in power and great glory, to reign over his people Israel. Again, the third and following verses of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah have been applied by the Baptist to the first advent—Luke iii. 3, 4—and yet the fulfilment of the principal portion of it is still future.

But, not to multiply instances, the literal birth of the Saviour is predicted in the following prophecy of Micah, and he is there introduced, as in the passage of the Apocalypse before us, as to be the ruler in Israel:—"And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth that is to be ruler in Israel."—Micah, v. 2. Simeon, moreover, an-

nounced him as, not only “the light to lighten the Gentiles,” which is his peculiar characteristic in the present dispensation, but to be “the glory of his people Israel,” which is manifestly suspended until his coming again, “to rule all nations with a rod of iron.” And, in fine, the Saviour himself, in his revelation to the Church at Thyatira, announces that he had been invested with the very office in question, though it has not been hitherto developed. “And he shall rule thee with a rod of iron : as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken in pieces ; even *as I received of my Father.*”—Rev. ii. 27. Hence we may conclude, that there is nothing inconsistent in an announcement of *the nativity* of the Saviour, that he was “to rule all nations with a rod of iron.”

In support of his view of this prophecy, Mr. Burgh also refers to the following passage from the Prophet Isaiah :—“Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word ; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name’s sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified : but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies. *Before she travailed she brought forth : before her pain came she was delivered of a man child.* Who hath heard such a thing ? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day ? or shall a nation be born at once ? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth (because Zion travailed and brought forth children.—Septuagint). Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth ? saith the Lord : shall I cause to bring

forth, and shut the womb, saith thy God?"—Is. lxvi. 5–9. Mr. Elliott also relies on this passage in support of his interpretation, that the prophecy which we are considering is prefigurative of the establishment of Christianity, and the subversion of paganism by Constantine.* Let us see how far it supports the respective views of these authors.

In the first place, the foregoing parturition cannot refer to the event prefigured by the parturition in the Apocalypse; for in the one, the delivery of the Woman is represented as being *before she travailed*, and before her pain came, while in the other, the leading feature of the prophecy is, that "she being with child, cried, *travailing in birth*, and pained to be delivered." But independent of this manifest variance between the two prophecies in question, the true meaning and purport of the foregoing passage of Isaiah is, we conceive, very different from Mr. Burgh's or Mr. Elliott's conceptions of it. The Church, or people, which is there represented as bringing forth the man child, is not the Jewish Church, as Mr. Burgh concludes, but the Gentile Christian Church, as will appear from the following explanatory paraphrase of the passage in question:—"Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my name's sake (that is, the Gentiles, who cast out and hated the Jews for the Lord's name's sake), said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear *to your joy*, and they shall be ashamed. . . . Before

* Hor. Apoc., vol. ii. pp. 772, 773.

she (the Gentile Church) travailed, she brought forth ; before her pain came she was delivered of a man child (that is, the Gentile Church, in its very inception, without any of the previous travail or pain of the Jewish Church, became, by the mercy of God, partakers of all the benefits of the Saviour's birth). Who has heard such a thing ? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day ? or shall a nation be born at once ? for as soon as (because) Zion has travailed, she (and) brought forth her children"—which conveys, we conceive, an expression of wonder that the Gentile Church should be born in a day, without previous travail, because Zion, or the Jewish Church, had brought forth her children after having travailed. The succeeding verses appear to be the conclusion drawn as to the superior blessings and effect that are to be looked for, from the Saviour's birth, to the Church which had travailed and pained so long to be delivered. Thus, if this view of the prophecy of Isaiah be well founded, it not only does not afford any support to the views of either Mr. Burgh or Mr. Elliott, but is, to a great extent, corroborative of our interpretation of the Apocalyptic imagery which we have been considering.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROPHECIES OF THE IMAGE AND OF THE
FOUR WILD BEASTS.

“He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.”—DAN. ii. 22.

BEFORE entering on the consideration of the prophetic symbols of the next chapter of “the Revelation,” which opens with an emergence of a seven-headed and ten-horned monster from *the sea*, it will contribute to the elucidation of the subject, to revert to the consideration of the two prophetic visions of the Image and of the four Wild Beasts, which are recorded in the Book of Daniel; inasmuch as it appears to be universally admitted, that all expositors, however different their views may be in other respects, harmonise in the conclusion, that the fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar’s image, the fourth Beast of Daniel’s vision, and this Beast of the Revelations, are identical. It is therefore clear, that the ascertainment of the meaning and purport of the two former of these visions, must be of assistance in opening out the meaning and purport of the latter, which will supply us with a key to the interpretation of the whole reve-

lation in question. With this view, we shall commence our inquiries with an examination of the prophetic vision of the Image which appeared to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in or about the year 609, A.C., and which is thus described by the Prophet Daniel :—

“Thou, O king, sawest and behold a great Image. This great Image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This Image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest until that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the Image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer’s threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the Image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”—Dan. ii. 31-35.

The interpretation of this vision is also recorded by the Prophet; and through the medium of this interpretation, other prophecies of Scripture, and the subsequent events which have been preserved for us in history, we hope to be enabled to unfold the true intent and meaning of the vision.

The image consists of four parts—1st, the head; 2nd, the breast and arms; 3rd, the belly and thighs; and 4th, the legs and feet. These we propose to examine separately.

First.—With respect to the head, there can be no doubt or controversy as to that of which it is emblematic; inasmuch as the Prophet has expressly interpreted the same to be Nebuchadnezzar himself.

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings. . . . Thou art this head of gold.”—Dan. ii. 37, 38.

Secondly.—As to the head and arms, we are told by the Prophet, that they are symbolic of a kingdom which was to arise after Nebuchadnezzar, or, more properly speaking, after the expiration of the supremacy of the Babylonish, or Chaldean and Assyrian empire, over which he was the reigning sovereign. This kingdom was obviously the Medo-Persian empire, by which that of Babylon was subdued in the succeeding reign of Belshazzar, as described in the fifth chapter of Daniel—one of the arms denoting the Persian, and the other the Median empire, which became united under Cyrus.—Dan. v. 28, 31.

Thirdly.—The belly and thighs are, we are told by the Prophet, symbolical of a third kingdom of brass, that should rule over all the earth. This third kingdom is manifestly the Grecian, by which, under their King, Alexander the Great, the Medo-Persian empire was subdued about the year 331 A.C., and in whose geographical extent were comprehended the territories of the humbled Babylonish and Medo-Persian empires.

Fourthly.—The “legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay,” are declared by the Prophet to be “the fourth kingdom,” which he describes as to be “strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things.” This fourth kingdom is evidently the Roman empire, which subdued that of Greece, and thereby, in addition to its own peculiar territories, extended its iron sway over all the regions which had formed the preceding empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. It was, in the

words of the Prophet, strong as iron, forasmuch as it broke in pieces and subdued all the others.

With respect to the circumstance of the feet and toes being represented as part of clay and part of iron, it is explained by the Prophet, as indicating that "the kingdom shall be divided ; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay." The meaning of this we conceive to be, that the Roman empire, which was strong as iron, at the period of the subjugation by it of the preceding kingdoms (symbolized by the legs of iron), was not to retain to the last its strength and compactness, but to become diluted and degenerate, and finally to be subdivided into ten inferior kingdoms, symbolized by the feet and ten toes of the image. These ten toes, representing (as we conceive) the same thing as the ten horns of the fourth Beast of Daniel, and of the Beast of the Apocalypse, we shall have an opportunity of examining the purport of them more fully, when we come to the consideration of those prophetic symbols. We shall, therefore, in this place merely observe, that the toes being at the extremity of the foot, it would seem to be a natural consequence, that this subdivision of the Roman empire is to take place in its last state, and when it shall be drawing nigh to the close of its existence.

Such being the meaning of the several parts of the Image, which, as a whole, is obviously emblematic of the kingdoms of the world which were to exist from the days of the revelation to Nebuchadnezzar down to the time when all the kingdoms of the world should become the kingdoms of God and of his

Christ, we shall now endeavour to ascertain the anti-type of the Stone, which was to be cut out without hands, and which smote the Image on the feet and broke it in pieces, and afterwards became a great mountain that filled the whole earth. This Stone is manifestly the kingdom of Christ on earth, which is to be hewn out without hands, or the power of man. It is thus described by the Prophet:—"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, *which shall never be destroyed* ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and *it shall stand for ever.*" The kingdom, therefore, is the kingdom, the throne of which shall be the throne of David—the restored kingdom of Israel, which is the only kingdom that is to be indestructible. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest : and the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David ; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob *for ever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*"—Luke i. 32, 33. And again, Isaiah, in using the same figure of a stone, in a prophecy of the Saviour, reveals the seat of his kingdom upon earth. Behold I lay *in Zion* for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation."—Is. xxviii. 16. Thus Christ and his kingdom being identified, as were Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom, we may conclude that the fifth kingdom, which is to break in pieces and consume all the preceding kingdoms, and *to stand for ever*, is the restored kingdom of Israel, of which Christ is the precious corner stone ; and which is to swell into a

mountain and fill the whole earth. "In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. . . . For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."—Is. ii. 1, 2; Mic. iv. 1, 2. "For the nation and kingdom that shall not serve thee, shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."—Is. lx. 12.

The foregoing would appear to be an accurate accomplishment of this prophetic vision; nor are we aware of any inconsistencies with which the interpretation can be justly charged. It certainly assumes that the Roman dynasty has not yet come to an end; and that its existence is not to cease until it shall have been smitten by the Stone of Zion, at the close of the present dispensation—and this we are prepared to maintain, notwithstanding the assumption of many expositors to the contrary. Let us, however, in the first place, take the description of the Prophet, and see how consonant it is to the facts as they have occurred, and as they now exist. The legs are of iron—that is to say, the kingdom, as it first appears on its succeeding the subdued Grecian, was strong by the force of its arms, and so it continued until the fall of the Emperors. Then came the feet and toes, part of iron and part of potter's clay, which the Prophet explains as denoting a weakening or dilution of the power of the kingdom; and which was, and still is, the succeeding state of the Roman dynasty under the Popedom, and the Antichrist, into which, as will

hereafter more clearly appear, the Popedom is to expand. The power which is exercised by the Papacy is spiritual power, symbolized by the miry clay, while the temporal power of Rome, which is now, and is to continue, as we shall presently show, suspended until the latter days of this dispensation, will again revive, and display itself in the iron despotism of the Roman Antichrist. And thus *the feet and toes* of the Image are part of iron and part of potter's clay—a combination of Popish spiritual ascendancy and the temporal despotism of the Antichrist and his ten subordinate kings; which latter are, as we shall presently see, symbolized by the ten toes of the Image and the ten horns of the fourth Beast in the next prophetic vision.

Dr. Todd, in his "Donnellan Lectures," has endeavoured to sustain the view of the fourth kingdom, if not of the two which preceded it also, being altogether unfulfilled, maintaining that no nation has hitherto arisen, whose history at all corresponds with the prophetic description of it which is given in Daniel; and in support of this interpretation, he has enumerated a variety of objections to those of the expositors, who have considered the prophecy of the fourth kingdom to have been fulfilled in the Roman empire. None of these objections, however, are applicable to the interpretation which we have been endeavouring to uphold; and which, being consistent with the description of the Image, with the interpretation given by the Prophet, with the events which have already taken place, and with the events which we know from prophecy are yet to be fulfilled, has,

we conceive, all the requisites to render it satisfactory and conclusive. On the other hand, the interpretation that would postpone the fulfilment of the last three kingdoms to a period still future, must, in the admission that Nebuchadnezzar was the head of the Image, break its continuity, by introducing a chasm of many centuries between some of the members of the Image—that is to say, either between the head and the breast, or between the breast and the belly, or between the thighs and the legs. But where is there anything in the vision to warrant such an interruption in the continuity of the Image, every part of which is physically and chronologically connected with the remainder; insomuch that it is impossible not to conclude, that the expositor who contends for such an explanation of the symbol, must, and would, on the same principle of construction, have deferred the fulfilment of the golden head in the person and kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, until the near approach of the final consummation of all things, had not the Prophet stated specifically that the King of Babylon was this head of gold?

Having thus stated that we conceive the different parts of the Image to have been emblematic of the four continuous kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, we now proceed to the consideration of the vision of the four Beasts, which is manifestly connected with, and in some degree explanatory of, the previous prophetic vision of the Image and Stone, inasmuch as the fourth Beast, or kingdom, is explained to be “the fourth kingdom upon earth.”—Dan. vii. 23.

The vision in question will be found recorded in the first fourteen verses of the fifth chapter of the prophecies of Daniel. The interpretation which was unfolded to the Prophet follows ; and in our inquiry, we propose, in the first place, to describe what we conceive to be the meaning of the several parts, and then to test the explanation by what is declared to the Prophet to be the purport and intent of the revelation.

The four Beasts have been considered, almost universally, to be identical with the four kingdoms typified by the several parts of the preceding vision of the Image, viz., the Babylonish, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman; and in this view we concur. The several characteristics and features of the first three Beasts have been traced by commentators, to have been accurately typical of the several particulars disclosed, and realised in their respective histories ; but as the principal object we have in view is to identify the fourth Beast, or kingdom, and trace its prophetic history, we shall not stop to investigate and explain those others in detail.

The fourth Beast is admitted by all expositors to be identical with the kingdom symbolized by the legs and feet of the Image, and that we have traced to be the Roman—consequently, the Beast under consideration is emblematic of the Roman empire, whose despotic and irresistible sway is described as “ dreadful and terrible ; and it had great iron teeth ; it devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.”

The next remarkable characteristic of the Beast that is noticed is, that it had ten horns. These ten horns,

which are afterwards explained to be “ten kings that shall arise,” are obviously and admittedly symbolical of the same circumstance as the ten toes of the Image ; and as the ten toes of the Image are typical of the division of the Roman empire in its very last state—the toes being the extremity of the figure—there is no great violence in the conclusion, that the ten horns are typical of the kingdoms into which the Roman empire is yet, and shortly before its final dissolution, to be divided. These ten horns have been generally explained by those who maintain (as we do) that the fourth kingdom is the Roman, to pourtray ten kingdoms, into which, it has been alleged, the territorial dominions of Rome have been already divided ; but the very great discordance which has prevailed among that class of expositors, respecting the identification of these kingdoms, is strong evidence that the division has not yet taken place. The Roman empire, in its present weak and diluted state, is represented by *the feet* of the image, part of clay and part of iron ; and when, at last, it shall become divided into ten separate kingdoms, all of them, in a certain sense, as we shall presently explain, connected with, and subordinate to, that which shall, up to that time, be the head of the empire, then shall commence the fulfilment of the prophecy of the ten horns and ten toes.

The next object which presents itself, is another “little horn,” which was seen to come up among the ten horns, “before whom were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots,” “and behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth

speaking great things.” The interpretation of this phenomenon, which is disclosed to the Prophet, is as follows:—“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first; and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and dividing of a time.” We can have no difficulty in identifying this little horn thus described, with the Antichrist predicted by St. Paul, “who opposeth and exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”—2 Thess. ii. 4. This is also corroborated by the descriptions given of the destruction of this being by the same Prophet. In the prophecy before us, it is thus revealed:—“But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end.”—v. 26. By St. Paul, he is introduced as one “whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.”

This power, symbolized by the little horn, has by the generality of commentators been interpreted to prefigure the Papacy, represented in the person of its supreme head, the Pope; and it cannot be disputed, but that they have succeeded in tracing in the corruptions and abominations of that apostate system, something analogous to the features here depicted of the antitype of the little horn. With those expositions we

so far agree, that the analogy is, as might have been expected, to a certain extent, very obvious, inasmuch as in our previous investigations concerning the nature and powers of this awful being, we have traced him to be the incarnation and open manifestation of a pre-existing apostasy, or “mystery of iniquity,” at the present time, and ever since the days of the Apostles, pervading the world, but so secretly and covertly, as not only to deceive the great mass of its own deluded votaries, but to blind the eyes and the understandings of many sincere believers as to its real nature—and of this “mystery of iniquity,” Popery being, perhaps, the most tangible and manifest example that presents itself in the wide field of diabolical deceits and perversions of the truth, it is not to be wondered at, that the characteristics of the Antichrist should be traceable in a system of which it will be the open and undisguised revelation. These features it will not be necessary for us to trace. They will be found in the writings of Newton, Faber, Elliott, and many other expositors; and they bear, as we have already observed, so striking a resemblance to the leading characteristics of the Romish Church, that those commentators have considered that system to be the complete fulfilment of the prediction of the little horn; and the effect of this, as it appears to us, hasty and erroneous conclusion, has unfortunately been to lead another class of expositors into a still more fatal error. We allude to those, who, to relieve the Romish Church of the stigma of being the fulfilment of the prophecy of the little horn, have been led to deny the accomplishment of

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any part of the vision of the four Beasts, or of any part of the vision of the Image with the exception of the golden head.

This latter view has been ably supported by Dr. Todd, in his "Donnellan Sermons," where he has collected all that can be advanced on the subject. He has even carried out his system to the extent of denying the fulfilment of the vision of the Ram and the He Goat, which has been accomplished with such interesting accuracy in the wars of Alexander and Darius, that even if we had not been told by the Prophet himself, that those symbolical animals were the respective Kings of Media, Persia, and Greece, scarcely a doubt could have existed on the subject ; for even infidel writers have admitted the exactness of the correspondence between the prediction and the collisions which have taken place between the monarchs of those two countries. In addition to these prophecies, the vision of the things "noted in the Scripture of truth," as recorded in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, has likewise been included by Dr. Todd in the calendar of unfulfilled prophecy, though, like the preceding, the accomplishment, as far as the thirty-first verse, has been so exact, that sceptics have been driven to accuse the faithful of having written the prophecies after the events had happened. To these, he also expresses an inclination to add the prophecy of the seventy weeks, by which the Jews of old were led to look for the Messiah, at the very hour of his birth. So that the obvious tendency of the method of interpretation which has been adopted and vindicated by Dr. Todd, who follows Maitland,

is to deprive the Church of its chief evidence of the inspiration of Holy Writ, in the fulfilment of many of its prophecies, thereby yielding up a position never assailed by its adversaries, and putting a weapon into their hands, which would have been powerless had it not been forged by those of a friend.

But to return to our interpretation of the vision of the four Beasts.—We cannot leave the subject without adverting to some difficulties which have been stated by Dr. Todd to be fatal objections to the expositions which explain the prophecy as fulfilled in the Babylonish, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires. The first of them is to the effect, that the vision having appeared to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar, the successor of Nebuchadnezzar, if we interpret the first head to be identical with Nebuchadnezzar, the vision must have been partly symbolical of past events, which would be inconsistent with the angel's explanation in the seventeenth verse:—"These great Beasts, which are four, are four kings which *shall* arise out of the earth." It follows, therefore, he insists, that the first Beast cannot be identical with the golden head of the image. Now, admitting that the first Beast could not, with consistency, have been symbolic of Nebuchadnezzar, it might have been, as it actually was, symbolic of the Babylonish empire, which was still in existence at the time of the vision, and which could not, therefore, be said to have been a past event. The first kingdom, therefore, having been still in existence, and a portion of its history still future, it was introduced into the prophetic

vision in order to render the revelation harmonious and consistent, by exhibiting, like the vision of the Image, to the view of the Prophet, a series of political dynasties, which were to succeed each other, and to continue from his days down to those of the kingdom of Christ upon earth.

Another objection is, that it may be collected from the prophecy, that the four kingdoms are to be four contemporaneous kingdoms, and that the first three of them are to survive the last—it being stated, that after the fourth Beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flames, “as concerning the rest of the Beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.” To this objection we reply, that the conclusion drawn by Dr. Todd is not at all warranted by the passage to which he refers, and its context. The twelfth verse is, we conceive, introduced after the history of the continuance and final end of the fourth Beast, as an independent account of the ultimate destiny of the other Beasts, or kingdoms, which had been merely introduced on the scene, without further description of their fate, and which, after the interruption caused by the following out of the history of the fourth Beast, it was necessary to recur to, in order that the vision might be complete; and it is thus summed up:—“As concerning the rest of the Beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.” In confirmation of this construction, it has actually occurred, that while the dominion, or supremacy, of the first three kingdoms was taken away,

yet there was a prolonging of life given to them, as experience testifies to this day. In the same manner, in the previous vision of the Image, the destruction of the four kingdoms, *including that of Nebuchadnezzar*, is represented to be simultaneous, so that there must be, in some sense, a prolonging of life to them, as stated of the kingdoms symbolized by the Beasts.

The only other objection applicable to this interpretation is, that the fourth kingdom is described as "diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces," which, it is contended, is not at all descriptive of the characteristics to be found in the Roman empire—the Romans having been remarkable for moderation, for toleration, and for the gentle government of nations that submitted to their sway. True it may be, that the great object and aim of the Roman government was to civilize the conquered nations, and to incorporate them into itself; but the means employed for that end, as the annals of our own and of the other nations of Europe attest, can scarcely be said to be exaggerated in the foregoing language of the Prophet. All local governments were devoured, trampled on, and broken to pieces; and though the object may have been to supply something more refined and civilized in their place, yet the power which they exercised throughout their newly-acquired dominions, was directed principally to the subversion of all previously established rule and custom. Moreover, the prophecy is far from being completed yet; and we shall find, as we proceed in our inquiries, that

the time is yet in the womb of futurity, at which the Roman power, "the fourth kingdom on earth," shall exhibit, in its dealings with the world, a still more literal fulfilment of the prophetic description than any hitherto experienced.

For these reasons it is, that we adhere to the line of interpretation which has dealt with these prophecies as, for the most part, fulfilled, and in progress of fulfilment. Commentators, by reason of some inaccuracies in their views as to the important position which the Jews are to hold in the fulfilment, and respecting the nature of the Antichrist, have differed in their explanations of some of the details, though they concur in referring the fulfilment to the four kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. In this we agree with them ; more especially, as, concurring with Dr. Todd in his views of the nature of the Antichrist, we do not find it at all necessary to depart from the usual and obvious track of interpretation, to support and establish the conclusion at which he has sought to arrive, by diverging into a novel and dangerous path of construction.

With respect to the future state of the Roman dynasty, there is ample evidence, as we shall presently show, in the prophecies of Scripture, to warrant the conclusion, that the Roman dynasty will, previous to its final dissolution, expand into an immensity of power and dominion, and in that state become again the irresistible persecutor of the Christian Church. We also conceive, that ten contemporaneous kings shall, at this time, be the instruments by and through

which her power is to be exercised, but who shall ultimately annihilate her, in order to confer supremacy on the Antichrist, who is to be the last, most dangerous, and most powerful of the persecuting agents of Satan. All this, which is to be collected from the prophetic visions of Daniel, we shall find fully confirmed by the prophecies of the Apocalypse which we are about to examine.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEAST RISING FROM THE SEA.

“Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”—2 THESS. ii. 4.

WE now return to the consideration of the Book of “the Revelation,” having, in conformity with the almost unanimous consent of all commentators, established the identity of the fourth kingdom of Daniel’s Image, and of the fourth Beast, with the Roman dynasty. The prophetic vision which is now about to occupy our attention, is that contained in the thirteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, viz., the seven-headed and ten-horned Beast, which appears to the Evangelist as arising from *the sea*, and the two-horned lamb-like Beast which arises from *the earth*. We shall examine the prophecies relating to these two Beasts separately; and, conceiving as we do, that the right understanding of this part of “the Revelation” furnishes a key to all that is yet to come, we trust that the Spirit of God may be with us to direct our inquiries, and to guide us in our explanations of the results at which

we shall arrive. The following are the words of the Evangelist :—

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the Dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the Beast. And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the Beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”—Rev. xiii. 1–10.

We have already observed, that this seven-headed and ten-horned monster is universally admitted to be identical with the fourth kingdom and fourth Beast of the prophecies of Daniel, which have occupied our attention in the preceding chapter. We may, therefore, with safety conclude, that it represents the Roman dynasty in some one of the stages of its existence; merely observing, what will hereafter more

fully appear, that this identification is fully confirmed by the explanation given of the seven heads in the seventeenth chapter of this book, where they are declared by the angel to be typical of (among other things) the seven mountains on which the Woman sits—a description of Rome too palpable for even Romish writers to question.

The Roman dynasty, therefore, being designated by the Beast, we shall turn our attention to the meaning of the seven heads and ten horns. With respect to the seven heads, we see no reason for being dissatisfied with the generally received explanation of them, viz., that they denote the seven forms of government, under which the subjects of Rome have been, or shall be, swayed, from the rise of that power in Romulus, down to its fall at the second advent. On the contrary, we cannot but read a full confirmation of that opinion in the declaration of the angel respecting these seven heads in the seventeenth chapter of this book—"And there are seven kings ; five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come." Thus showing, that in the days of the Evangelist, five of the heads had fallen, one was in existence, and another was to arise. With respect to these heads, then, we concur with previous commentators, that the five which had fallen were, the Kingship, the Consulate, the Dictatorship, the Decemvirate, the Tribunate ; and the sixth, which was in existence at the period of the revelation, was the Emperorship. As to the seventh head, we submit that it has not yet arisen ; but that when it shall arise, it will be in the person of the being, denominated in Scripture, "the Antichrist," who shall, in the words of the revelation,

“continue for a short space.” On this latter point we differ from most, if not all, preceding commentators ; and on this foundation mainly rests the strength of the interpretation we are about to give of this section of “the Revelation.” We shall, therefore, endeavour to lead the minds of our readers into the train of reasoning from Scripture declarations, by which we have been led to this conclusion.

The seven-headed and ten-horned Beast is so presented to our view in three several and distinct parts of “the Book of the Revelation;” but in each of them we find a particular connected with it, distinguishing it from the others. First, it is introduced in the twelfth chapter, *having crowns on its heads*. Second, in the thirteenth chapter, *having crowns on its horns*. And Third, in the seventeenth chapter, *having no crowns either on its heads or its horns*. We may here observe, what we hope to establish, when it comes under our consideration in its proper order, that the Woman, which is represented in the seventeenth chapter as sitting on the Beast, is Popery, or the Romish Apostasy; consequently, the Roman power, at the time it is presented to us without crowns either on its heads or its horns, is under the influence of, and overridden by, that Apostasy. And how is it then described by the angel? “The Beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and shall arise out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.”—Rev. cxvii. 8. And again, in the same verse—“The Beast that was, and is not, and yet is” (or shall be).* It therefore follows incontro-

* According to Griesbach, this ought to be “*καὶ παρῆσται*,” instead of “*καὶ παρῆσται*,” as it is in our version.

vertibly, that, admitting this symbolic Woman to represent Popery, while the Roman power is overridden by her, as it has been, and still continues to be, that power (*the temporal power* as under the Emperors and the preceding forms of government) is in a non-existent state, and yet shall revive before it goes into perdition. Thus, from the prophecy itself we learn, that the Roman dynasty, while Popery is in existence, is to remain in a state of suspended animation—"it is not, and yet shall be;" and a brief consideration of the nature of the Papal government will evidence the truth of the prophetic description.

At no time since the decline and fall of the Roman empire, has the Popedom, which succeeded to the sovereignty of Rome, maintained itself in Christendom as a temporal or secular power. Its strength and energy, and their mischievous effects, have flowed from the spiritual influence which it exercises over its adherents in every part of the civilised world. All its domestic institutions are ecclesiastical; its legislative and executive functionaries are ecclesiastics; its weapons against insults and aggressions have ever been excommunications and interdicts: and nothing could better illustrate its imbecility as a temporal, and its vigour as a spiritual power, than the position it holds in the present day in the face of Europe, where we have seen the Pope and his officials replaced and maintained in the city of Rome by an army of foreigners, who can have no prospect or expectation of advantage from the costly and inconvenient alliance, beyond some exercise in their favour of that spiritual ascendancy which the Papacy retains and exercises

over so large a section of mankind ; and which even infidels feel would be powerless, if its seat were to be removed from the metropolis of “the fourth kingdom upon earth.” That it should there remain is the will of God, as declared by the mouth of his prophets ; and vain will be the endeavours of man to remove the Papal potentate from Rome, abridge his power, or lower his pretensions, until the apostate system shall have ripened into one of avowed rebellion against God and his Church, when it shall be crushed by the Stone of Israel, and all its component parts scattered “like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.” Thus it is, that the feet of Daniel’s image are represented as part of iron and part of clay—the former denoting the *temporal*, and the latter the *spiritual*, power ; but which shall not, we are told, “*cleave to one another :*” and thus it is, therefore, that during the continuance of the spiritual ascendancy of the Popedom, the temporal power of Rome shall be suspended, as described by the Evangelist—“It was, and is not, and yet shall be.”

History and experience testify that there never has been any coherence between these two forms of authority. At no time, since the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, have the civil and ecclesiastical powers continued to co-exist in any country of Christendom. One or the other has prevailed ; and the struggle has always hitherto, in every nation of Europe, with the exception of Rome, been decided in favour of the civil power. But in Rome, though the ecclesiastical element of the Papal government has maintained the ascendancy, it has been at the sacri-

fice of her position and existence as a temporal power; for the continued intestine dissensions, arising from the utter incompatibility of the lay and spiritual elements of administration in the same community, has, and ever must, prevent her taking up her position *as a temporal power* among the nations. This has become so obvious, that to establish the Pope-dom as an exclusively spiritual power, by separating from her the civil jurisdiction which she has ever been struggling, but in vain, to preserve over her own immediate subjects, has become a problem, the solution of which is now engaging the attention of the profoundest legislators and statesmen of the age.* The solution, however, of that problem must eventuate in something beyond the ken of mere worldly wisdom, but easily discoverable by the light of prophecy; and from what God has disclosed to us of those things that are coming upon the world, we feel assured that the day which shall dawn on a purely spiritual authority, enthroned, by the aid of European powers, on the seven hills of Rome, will be the birthday of the Antichrist. Such a power, once so established and recognised, cannot fail—aided as it will be, by the institutions and machinery which the Papacy, for the extension and consolidation of her dominions, has long since spread through all lands—to increase and encroach on the civil governments that shall surround and patronise her. In exchange for a limited domain and a handful of

* See an article in the *Quarterly Review* for December, 1851, and another in the *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1852, on Gladstone's translation of Farini's "*Stato Romano*."

disaffected and disorganised subjects, she will have gained kingdoms for her territories, and kings for her subjects. And thus all will progress to the development of the Antichrist, who, in the plenitude of pride and power, shall at length proclaim himself to be the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

Hence it is that, the temporal supremacy of Rome being in abeyance during the continuance of the Papacy, the Beast is represented in the seventeenth chapter as having no crowns on any part of it. On this principle of construction, when the Roman power is introduced to view in its Pagan state, the crowns ought to be found on the heads, one or other of the heads having been then the form of government; and accordingly, we find in the twelfth chapter, where the seven-headed and ten-horned Dragon, or Pagan Rome, is presented to our view as watching for the birth of the Saviour, ready to devour him, that the crowns are upon his heads.

Thus, the Roman dynasty, "the fourth kingdom upon earth," is to be considered under three different aspects:—1st, Pagan Rome; 2nd, Papal Rome; 3rd, Rome in its future or restored state of temporal sovereignty, which we shall presently show to be Rome under the Antichrist; and which will differ from Pagan Rome, by the admission of the advent of a Messiah, though in the person of the Antichrist; and from Papal Rome, by the denial that Christ was that Messiah. In the first, viz., Pagan Rome, the Emperorship having been in existence, the crowns were on the heads. In the second, viz., Papal Rome, the Emperorship having passed away ("it was and

is not"), the crowns are removed from the heads, and are not yet found on the horns. And in the revived Roman dynasty, that shall arise out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition, the crowns ought to be found on the horns, if our interpretation be correct, that the division of the Roman dynasty among the ten kings, typified by the ten horns and ten toes, is not to take place until the approach of its final destruction.

Let us now look at the first Beast of the thirteenth chapter, which is under our immediate consideration, and we find the crowns on the ten horns, and on his heads the names of blasphemy. Is not this a confirmation of our position, that in it, which is admitted to be the Roman dynasty, in some one of its forms or stages of existence, we are not looking at it during the Papacy, when the Beast has no crowns either on its heads or its horns, and when, moreover, it is described as in a state of suspended existence; but that we are looking at it in a state of restoration yet to come, when it shall be divided among, and ruled over by, ten kings—all of these, however, as we shall presently see, subordinate to the Antichrist? Now, with respect to the seventh head, which, according to our view, has not yet arisen, we have already intimated that we conceive that it will be the Antichrist yet to arise, and in his person fulfil the prophetic description of him given in the 2nd Thessalonians, as one "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Compare this with the de-

scription of the Beast now before us, and we find the same self-exaltation against God, in the words, "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven ;" and the same divine honours conceded to him—"And they worshipped the Beast, saying, who is like unto the Beast?" and therefore it is, that we have come to the conclusion, that the being here pourtrayed is the Antichrist, and the seventh head of the Roman empire. This we shall find fully confirmed by our future inquiries. Before, however, we proceed farther, we shall call attention once more to our conclusions respecting the nature and origin of the Antichrist.

Though there have been, and still are, many species of apostasy in the world, yet Popery has always been the most prominent, the most extensive, and the most enduring of all ; and as being connected with Rome, the seat and centre of the fourth kingdom, which is to exist down to the second advent of our Lord, by whom it is to be exterminated, it is peculiarly the subject of prophecy. It is, in truth, that "mystery of iniquity" which has been working in the world since the days of the Apostles, and which will at last be embodied, and, in its naked deformity, openly revealed in "the Man of Sin," the Antichrist. In it are to be traced by the Christian inquirer, an outline of the marks and tokens of the Antichrist—so much so, that in the pretensions and proceedings of its visible head, the Pope, most commentators have, as they imagine, discovered the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to the Antichrist ; while, on the

other hand, others have as strenuously denied that Popery can, with any justice, be so stigmatised: from all which we would infer, that it is still “the mystery of iniquity,” but that hereafter it will expand into the open revelation of that wicked one, who will actually and unequivocally exalt himself above all that is called God and that is worshipped, and seal his pretensions by miraculous and devilish agencies and machinations. We may, therefore, expect, that when the fulness of the time shall have come, some individual Pope (for such is the tendency of his office) will openly discard the title of God’s vicegerent, or vicar upon earth, and assume the character of the Messiah himself—denying that Christ has come in the flesh, claiming divine honours, and assuming the names of blasphemy, “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.” This being is to be the restorer of the Roman temporal dynasty—the seventh, and also an eighth, head of the Beast, who, “when he cometh, shall continue a short space.”—Rev. xvii. 10, 11. It is during this reign that we are told, the ten kings, typified by the ten horns, are to appear in the scene, and who are represented as having one mind, and giving their power and strength unto the Beast. “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, *which have received no kingdom as yet*; but receive power as kings one hour (simultaneously) with the Beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast.”—Rev. xvii. 12, 13.

Thus we have a confederation of ten kings, who shall acknowledge the Antichrist as their sovereign, and submit all their power and authority unto him.

These kings are called in another place, "the kings of the earth and of the whole world."—Rev. xvi. 14; and it would appear, that at the time when these things shall come to pass, the government of the whole Gentile world will be divided among ten kings, and that these ten kings shall acknowledge the Antichrist, the head of the Roman kingdom, as supreme and divine—thus investing him with the title of "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords," and thereby stamping "upon his heads the names of blasphemy." "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; *for He is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.*"—Rev. xvii. 14. Here, then, is the antitype, or fulfilment of the prophecy, of the Beast "having seven heads and ten horns, *and upon his horns ten crowns.*" "And the Dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

The next part of the description of this Beast is, that "one of the heads was wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the Beast." This phenomenon we take to be the same as that described, in the seventeenth chapter, of the same Beast, where, after the declaration that the seventh head, when it came, was to "continue a short space" (xvii. 10), the angel goes on to describe, that "the Beast that was and is not, he is the eighth, and is (out) of the seven,* and goeth into perdition." From this description, it would appear, that the eighth head is to be a continuation of the seventh, but somewhat different in form; and the explanation

* "Εκ των επτα."

of the events as they will occur we may collect to be as follows :—The Antichrist will, as we observed, be an individual who shall arise in the Romish apostasy, most probably one of the Popes, who shall claim divine honours and supremacy, and re-establish the Roman empire, thus being the seventh head of it. This individual shall be slain in the destruction of Rome by the ten kings, who shall not then have acknowledged his claim to divine honours, and in which destruction Popery itself shall be exterminated, as described in the seventeenth chapter ; and after that destruction of Babylon and the Scarlet Whore (Rome and the Papacy), the slain Antichrist shall be raised from the dead by the agency of the Devil, in imitation of the true Christ, when his deadly wound shall be healed, and all the world shall wonder after the Beast ; and then shall his claim to divine honours be acknowledged by the whole world, and the ten kings submit to his pretensions, and confederate to consolidate his empire. “ And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast ; and they worshipped the Beast, saying, who is like unto the Beast ? who is able to make war with him ? ” It is not till after this revival (the deadly wound was healed) that he appears, as the eighth head, in the form here presented to us, opening his mouth, “ speaking great things and blasphemies ” against God, “ to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven,” making war with, and overcoming, the saints, and extending his power over “ all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”

It is then said of him, that “ it was given him to

continue forty-two months." In the original, the words are *και εδοθη αυτω εξουσια ποιησαι μηνα τεσσαρακοντα δυο*, which may, with more propriety, be translated—"And power was given him *to make* forty-two months." It may be recollected, that we explained the meaning of the Apocalyptic symbol of the forty-two months, to denote a wilderness or outcast state of the Jewish Church; and we have shewn in "The Latter Days," that at the period of the rise of the Antichrist, the Jews shall have been restored to their own land, and again in covenant with their God. We have also shewn (which will more clearly appear in the proceedings of the second Beast) that the Antichrist shall, with the assistance of the second Beast, suppress their sacrifices, and set up the abomination of desolation in their temple, thereby driving out once more the Jewish Church into the wilderness, as foretold by Ezekiel:—"And thou, profane wicked Prince of Israel, whose day is come, whose iniquity shall have no end. Thus saith the Lord God; remove the diadem, and take off the crown: I will *overturn, overturn, overturn it*; and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him."—Ezek. xxi. 25–27. Here, then, is a prediction that from the deposition of Jehoiachim, the last of Judah's kings, there should be *three overturnings* of Judah, until he (Christ) should come "whose right it is," and to whom it is to be given. The first of these was brought to pass by Nebuchadnezzar, the second by Titus, and the third shall be, after the restoration, by the Antichrist. If such is to be the issue of events as revealed to us, the meaning of the

phrase in the text, as we have translated it, is obvious, viz., that to him (the Antichrist) shall be given *the power* (ἐξουσία) to make a forty-two months' period, or to drive out the Jewish Church into the wilderness for the third and last time. This passage in the Revelation confirms our interpretation of the Apocalyptic dates, inasmuch as no other interpretation will admit of a literal translation of the text.

The Revelation then describes not only the extension of the power of this Being over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, but that he shall receive divine worship from "all that dwell upon the earth," except the very elect, "whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." It then continues—"If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the faith and patience of the saints." When we look back at the circumstance of the Beast having been revived, by diabolical agencies, from a deadly wound, the faith and patience of the saints who shall have witnessed the miracle must be sorely tried; and some consolation and support will be necessary for them, in a revelation of the ultimate subjection of these rebels against their God. At the same time, having died once, the Antichrist cannot again see death, but he may be taken and put into captivity, while his adherents may and shall be slain with the sword: and so it is revealed in the prophetic description of the final conflict between Christ and the Antichristian faction, in the nineteenth chapter, that "the Beast was

taken, and with him the False Prophet. These both were *cast alive* into a lake of fire burning with brimstone," while "the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse."—Rev. xix. 20, 21. Thus showing, that while those of the persecutors who cannot see death again, are to go into captivity, those who are still mortal shall be slain with the sword. "Here is the faith and patience of the saints."

Such we conceive to be the meaning and import of the several parts of this all-important prophetic picture of the Beast which appeared to the Evangelist rising *from the sea*. All commentators, with very few exceptions, concur in opinion, that it is a representation of the Roman power in some one of its stages—either Pagan Rome, Papal Rome, or Rome in some future state. It is obvious that it cannot be construed to pourtray Pagan Rome, inasmuch as it is to continue in existence until the period of its destruction at the second advent, as described in the nineteenth chapter of this book; whereas Pagan Rome has long since ceased to exist. It is equally clear, that neither it nor the second Beast, or False Prophet, can be identified with Papal Rome; because all commentators who have advocated such an interpretation, contend also that the Scarlet Whore of the seventeenth chapter is Rome Papal likewise; and it appears from the sixteenth verse of that chapter, that the Beast in question is to survive the Whore, or the Papacy, and to be afterwards destroyed along with the False Prophet, at the second advent. Consequently, it must pourtray, as we have interpreted it, the Roman power

in a future or restored state of pre-eminence ; and if we are to understand the words of this prophecy in their obvious and literal sense, in a state of open and undisguised rebellion and blasphemy against God—not in a state of iniquity that could be termed “a mystery of iniquity,” but a revelation of a wicked one, who shall exalt himself above all that is called God.

The Roman power, in a restored state, being, therefore, the fulfilment of this prophecy, we have proved, from comparing this with the exposition given by the angel in the seventeenth chapter, of the same Beast, that it is that power under the seventh and eighth head, or the Antichrist, who will arise in Popery, and expand into the natural tendency of Popish principles, Infidelity, or open rebellion against God—the Sovereign over ten kings (the King of Kings), and exalting himself above all that is called God, and that is worshipped (the Lord of Lords) ; which being the titles of Christ, are, when marked on the head of the Beast, “the names of blasphemy”—v. 1. This Beast, therefore, represents, at the time of his appearance, the centre and consummation of all civil and ecclesiastical, temporal and spiritual, power on earth, as all kindreds, tongues, and nations are not only to be subject to his dominion, but likewise (with the exception of the very elect) to worship him ; and the necessity for such a heading up of iniquity will be apparent from a few reflections on the subject.

All power and authority in the world is reducible to two classes, civil and ecclesiastical, both of them

deeply and extensively, as experience has proved, impregnated with evil; and as we are told that the great object of our Saviour's second coming in power and great glory is, "to put down all rule, and all authority, and power" (1 Cor. xv. 24), and to exterminate all evil, so must we expect that evil will have been headed up and consummated previous to its destruction, so as to be distinct and separate from everything that is good. Now, civil and ecclesiastical governments, while they are, in the present day, tainted with infidelity and apostasy to a grievous extent, have, at the same time, in them an admixture of much that is good and valuable in the sight of God. The supremacy and superintendence of the true God is, in many instances, admitted and acknowledged in and by them and their institutions, though they are, at the same time, guilty of many a sad and lamentable departure from his will and directions; and experience, independent of revelation, must lead us to the conclusion, that the evil will increase while the good shall decrease, until the latter shall vanish altogether: and then will be exhibited the fearful spectacle of the civil governments of the world throwing off all allegiance to the God of heaven, and raising the daring and undisguised standard of independence and rebellion against the Sovereign of the universe, while ecclesiastical apostasy shall also consummate its iniquity in the Antichrist denial of the Father and the Son—of Him who created and Him who redeemed them—and transfer their allegiance to the impostor before us. It is when this consummation of unqualified evil shall

have taken place—when nothing that is good shall be found to be mingled with it, that Christ shall take unto himself his great power, and exterminate it altogether.

Such being the case, the Beast, the subject matter of the prophecy which we have been considering, is, we conceive, the exponent of civil and ecclesiastical government in this state of open and avowed rebellion against God, and of unqualified submission to Satan and his pretensions. His power is represented as a combination of spiritual and temporal authority—unlimited subjection, and voluntary worship; and these worshippers are depicted as the worshippers of Satan as well as of himself; and he is described as opening his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and those that dwell in heaven. No language could so clearly and unequivocally pourtray a state of government in open and unmitigated rebellion against God; and it is vain to contend, that in any state of society (except, perhaps, during a short-lived paroxysm of the French Revolution), even a semblance of such principles and pretensions have ever been avowed, much less sanctioned or tolerated. To say that Popery has been the fulfilment, would be to say that the power of the Pope has extended over all kindreds, tongues, and nations, and that all mankind (except the very elect) have been its worshippers. Such an occurrence has never yet taken place; and to adapt the language of the prophecy to the true state of facts, as recorded in history and known by experience, will be neither more nor less than to alter it, on the principle that the words used by the Evangelist are not to be under-

stood in their usual and natural meaning. In short, that when the inspired penman used the terms, "all kindreds, tongues, and nations," he meant something less than all kindreds, tongues, and nations.

In truth, the struggle that has long pervaded the kingdoms of the civilized world, has been, and is, between the spirit of despotism on the one hand, and that of democracy on the other ; and though the latter may, as we have seen of late, obtain temporary successes, the former will, no doubt, as we have likewise witnessed, ultimately prevail—and the great and final triumph of despotism will be perfected and manifested in the installation of the Antichrist as the King of Kings. Despotism is the very essence of the Papacy ; the atmosphere it breathes is absolutism and passive submission. It adopts and sustains in its institutions the theory of an infallible head, whose infallibility is admitted and evidenced by the abject and unquestioning obedience to its mandates of those over whom his authority extends. The private judgments and personal convictions of the members of the Church of Rome are yielded up, without question or remonstrance, at the bidding of the superior head of their community. Their creed is—

" My author and disposer, what thou bid'st,
Unargued I obey."

But nevertheless, from experience, we find, that this perfect despotism is, in the present day, exercised, and submitted to, in what may be truly termed mystery or disguise. It is veiled under the somewhat indefinite phrase of "spiritual power ;"

but, within the sphere of its authority, all things are under its feet. Cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, are supreme over their subordinates ; but the Pope is supreme over all, and rules over and through them, as the Antichrist will reign over and through his ten subordinate kings, but in the plenitude of temporal power, and without the secrecy and dissimulation which now envelope the absolutism of Popery. And thus we see, that the institutions of the Papacy possess all the features and characteristics of the Antichrist ; but that the reign of the Antichrist will be the open manifestation of this “ mystery of iniquity,” the undisguised, absolute, and acknowledged sway of a single despot over his subjects, through the medium of subordinate despots.

But to return. The necessity of this open manifestation of iniquity, or undisguised rebellion against God, of both civil and ecclesiastical power previous to their extermination, is very clearly to be collected from several parts of Scripture. We shall, however, only direct attention to one which appears to confirm the position, and which will, at the same time, be found of importance in elucidating other parts of this book which have yet to come under our consideration. The passage to which we refer is in the Epistle of St. Jude, who sums up the progress of iniquity and its destruction, in the following words :—“ Woe unto them ! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying (or rebellion) of Core (Korah).”—Jude, 11. Now, natural infidelity was the sin of Cain ; the error of Balaam was apos-

tasy, he having been a prophet of God ; and the gainsaying of Korah and his companions was an open rebellion of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities against Moses and Aaron, the supreme and divinely appointed heads of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of Israel. Thus, natural infidelity and ecclesiastical apostasy being the precursory evils which have in all times pervaded the world, while the text speaks of the wicked being involved in both, it does not speak of their final destruction, until there shall have been an open manifestation and rebellion, when, we are told, "they shall perish in the gainsaying of Core."

In conclusion, we would observe, that it is impossible to interpret this revelation as symbolic of any particular infidelity or apostasy that has hitherto existed, or which shall hereafter exist, unless we, at the same time, admit that their existence is to continue until the second coming of Christ, so as to be destroyed by him. The revelation of the Beast and the False Prophet being destroyed by him at his advent, proves this to demonstration ; and if this be true, it must be then admitted that this vision of the two Beasts has not yet been completely fulfilled. And if not completely fulfilled, is not the believer justified in the expectation of a literal accomplishment of the unlimited power, the extensive and unmitigated persecutions, the miraculous agencies, and the open blasphemies and rebellion against God, that are to be found in the words before us ? It is this construction alone of the prophecy that makes it of so much value to the inquiring Christian ; and those who denounce

such a system of interpretation as that which we have been advocating, should pause at the reflection forced on us by the whole tenor of Revelation, that Satan is now the Prince of this World, and that his power must increase, until his army shall rise in open and undisguised warfare against the God of Heaven, and those that are called by his name. Where is the revelation of this consummation of iniquity, if not in the chapter before us? In what words could it be described, if not in those which describe the powers and pretensions of these two Beasts? And, therefore, while we admit that those who suffered from the persecutions of Pagan and Infidel Rome, and those who have been troubled by the devilish machinations and devices of Papal or Apostate Rome, have traced the features of their enemy in the Apocalyptic picture of this Beast, and found consolation and support therein, we must contend, that to look for a further and more complete accomplishment is more consistent with reason, experience, and the analogy of Scripture prophecies. Rome, as we before observed, is "the fourth kingdom on earth," and is to continue in one shape or another until it shall be struck by the Stone and annihilated. Rome, therefore, will never be lost sight of in the revelation of God's dealings with the world, until its destruction be consummate. It is, therefore, consistent with God's will and intention that this prophecy should be a disclosure of the various forms and proceedings of that power; and we have traced in it a revelation of Rome past, Rome present, and Rome to be, in all its shapes, the consistent and continuing enemy of Christ's kingdom,

and the relentless persecutor of his saints. And it is clear, that any interpretation which does not bring out the future state of this fourth kingdom, and continue it down to the period of its open hostility to God, when it is to perish, must be based on the supposition, that Daniel's Image has been already crushed by the Stone ; and that, in the expansion of the Stone into the mountain, iniquity is now melting away before the spread of Gospel truth. Few Christian inquirers will be found, in the present day, to uphold a principle so contradictory to Scripture and experience. The increase of evil to a consummation is the ground on which rests the interpretation which we have been endeavouring to uphold ; and where that principle is admitted, we feel satisfied that the conclusions at which we have arrived, or some similar and consistent with them, must sooner or later be received.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BEAST RISING FROM THE EARTH.

“And his power shall be mighty ; but not by his own power ; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise, and shall destroy *the mighty and the holy people.*”—DAN. viii. 24.

WE shall now proceed to the consideration of the prophecy of the second Beast, which appeared to the Evangelist “coming up out *of the earth.*” This Beast we shall find connected in its origin and proceedings with God’s people, the Jews ; and we shall, therefore, before entering on the explanation of the particulars revealed concerning it, recall the attention of our readers to the result of the inquiries we made in “The Latter Days,” respecting their future state and restoration.

The national restoration of the Jews is a truth so clearly revealed in Scripture, and so generally admitted in the present day, that it would be a mere waste of time to repeat the various prophecies of Scripture in which that truth is set forth. The principal of these will be found in our previous treatise.* But, besides their restoration as a nation, to the land of Judea, we have, as we have likewise traced, abundant revelations in God’s Word, of their restoration as a Church in covenant with God : that is to say, not

* “The Latter Days,” c. ii.

only will the Jews be restored to their own land, but as Jews, God will again for a time enter into covenant with them, rebuild their temple, and restore their ceremonial law. This is a truth hard to be received by Gentile minds, but nevertheless it is a truth confirmed by the words of Holy Writ. Many of the evidences of this renewal or revival of the old dispensation covenant we have already collected and compared; but as the subject is of much importance, and, like many of the most valuable truths of Scripture, only beginning to open itself to inquiring Christians, we shall recapitulate some of them, and bring forward other passages of Scripture to illustrate and confirm our previous conclusions.

The Prophet Daniel, in the ninth chapter of his prophecies, is introduced in supplication and prayer to his God, to turn away his anger and fury from the city of Jerusalem, and his people the Jews; and the Angel Gabriel is sent to comfort and enlighten him concerning them, in the following revelation of God's will as regarded their duration as a people or nation, until the blotting out of all their transgressions. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make a reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."—Dan. ix. 24. This period of seventy weeks is, in the subsequent verses of the same chapter, divided by the angel into three parts—the first consisting of seven weeks; the second, of sixty-two weeks, ending with the cutting off of the Messiah;

and the third and last, of one week. These seventy weeks, denoting seventy weeks of years, or 490 years, commencing “from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,” began to run from the year 450, B.C.; and, therefore, the seven weeks and sixty-two weeks (sixty-nine weeks) terminated in the year of our Lord 33, which was the year of the Saviour’s death—when, as appears from the twenty-sixth verse, the Jews are to be no longer his people (margin)—the old dispensation was finished, and they became outcast. But though they became thus outcast, and have so continued ever since, they are not to continue so for ever; for we are told in the next verse (v. 27), that “he shall confirm the covenant with many *for one week*,” *i. e.*, for the last remaining of the seventy weeks; and during that week, the abomination of desolation shall be set up in the restored temple, the sacrifice suspended, and the Jews subjected to the Antichristian persecution, or “the great tribulation” so often alluded to in Scripture.

This renewal of the covenant with the Jewish people in the latter days, is also spoken of in several other passages of Holy Writ. For instance, in the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel, when God is speaking of gathering the Jews out of the countries through which they are scattered, he says—“I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant” (v. 37).
 “For on my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me :

there will I accept them, and there will I require your *offerings*, and the first-fruits of *your oblations*, with all your holy things" (v. 40). Look then to the divine declaration in the first chapter of Isaiah—"And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and I will *restore thy judges as at the first*, and *thy counsellors as at the beginning*: afterwards thou shalt be called *The city of righteousness, the faithful city.*"—Is. i. 25, 26.

But not to multiply quotations to a similar effect, we would refer our readers to the fortieth and following chapters of Ezekiel, where not only is the precise model of the Temple, which the Jews are to rebuild, given for their guidance, and our instruction, but the ordinances of the altar, the exact mode of offering the sacrifices, and the regulation of the duties of the priesthood, the prince, and the people; and that too, in language so literal and unambiguous, that no attempt has been made to spiritualise or explain it away. That no such temple has ever yet been built, no such ordinances as those here described instituted, is universally admitted; and, therefore, to say that the Jewish temple will never again be erected on Mount Zion, and that the Jewish ceremonial law is never to be re-established, and that too, according to God's own direction and institution, is to pronounce the words of prophecy to have fallen to the ground, and to have been preserved in Scripture as a record of its fallibility. On this prophecy alone we may rest the position, that not only the Jewish nation, but also the Jewish Church, as such, will be

restored ; and we shall, therefore, in conclusion, merely call attention to the last passage of the Old Testament, which enjoins on Israel the continued remembrance of their law and ceremonies, and points to the instrument by whom the restoration is to be accomplished :—"Remember ye *the law of Moses* my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, *with the statutes and judgments*. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the *great and dreadful day of the Lord* : and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."—Mal. iv. 4-6.

It may be asked, how and at what time is the national conversion of the Jews to the acknowledgment of Christ, as their Messiah and Saviour, to take place ? To this we answer from Scripture likewise, that it will occur at, or immediately before, his personal appearance in power and great glory, when they shall receive him as their Saviour and their King at the same time, and mourn for their previous rejection of him. First, we find in the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel :—"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven : and *then* shall *all the tribes of the earth* (the land) mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."—v. 30. Here the mourning of the tribes (the Jews) being inserted between *the sign* of Christ's coming, and his *actual appearance*, shows the close connexion, in point of time, between the events. The same would also ap-

pear to follow from the mourning of the Jews described in the twelfth chapter of Zechariah, in which their contrition is described as connected with the looking on him whom *they pierced*, intimating, as appears from St. John, xix. 34–37, that the actual looking on Christ in the flesh, and recognising in him their acknowledged Messiah, the person who was, by their forefathers, crucified and pierced, will be the cause of the unexampled and unparalleled mourning pourtrayed in Zech. xii. 9–14. Again, in the concluding chapter of the same prophecies of Zechariah, we find a description of this twilight state of mind with respect to God, when they shall be, once more, in covenant with him as Jews, but not as Christians. The Prophet, after describing the day of the Lord, when all nations shall be gathered against Jerusalem to battle, and when the Lord shall go forth to fight against them, and his feet shall stand once more upon the Mount of Olives, adding, “And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee,” proceeds thus :—“And it shall come to pass *in that day*, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark : but it shall be one day that shall be known unto the Lord, not day, nor night ; but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light.”—Zech. xiv. 6, 7. Thus, in this day of the restoration of the Jewish worship, after the pattern of God’s own ordinances preserved for them in the prophecies of Ezekiel, but before their recognition and acknowledgment of the Saviour, or him whom they had pierced, “the light shall not be clear, nor dark,” “not day, nor night,” but “at evening time,” viz., the close of this period

which is to terminate with the second advent, "it shall be light;" for the blindness shall be taken from their eyes, and "so all Israel shall be saved."

Thus, it appears that in the latter days of this dispensation, the Jews will be restored to their own land, their temple rebuilt, and their ceremonial worship re-established; while, at the same period, the Gentile nations, as such, shall have wholly thrown off their allegiance to God, and submitted themselves to the head of the revived Roman empire, the Antichrist, who shall not only deny Christ, but announce himself to be the Messiah, attesting his claims to divine honours by miracles and prodigies. This is confirmed by the prophecy in Isaiah of this revival of the Jewish Church, where we find, that when its light shall dawn, darkness shall be overspreading the Gentile world. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, *the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people* (the Gentiles): but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Is. lx. 1–3.

In this hour, when the coming of the Son of Man is not looked for by the Gentiles, and while the Jews are expecting their Messiah, the only nation on earth by whom the true God shall be acknowledged, will be that of Israel;* against which, therefore, the powers

* We may remark, in confirmation of this, that while it is stated (v. 4), that *the whole world* "worshipped" (προσκυνησαν) the Beast on his appearance, it is stated with respect to the Jews, that

and persuasions of the Antichrist shall be directed; and in the attempt to subdue which, he shall at last stumble and come to his end, as revealed in the prophecies of Daniel.—Dan. xi. 41–45. At this time, one shall arise from among the Jews themselves, an apostate agent of Satan, armed with miraculous and physical powers, to seduce or compel the Jewish people to submit themselves to the Antichrist, and to acknowledge his pretensions to be the Messiah: one who shall re-enact the proceedings of the apostate Jew, Menelaus, the agent of Antiochus Epiphanus, the antitype of the Antichrist, who set up an image of that vile instrument of Satan in the Temple, and endeavoured to compel the Jews to worship it—in the same manner that the second Beast is here represented as compelling “those that dwell upon the earth” to worship the image of the first Beast.

That the Antichrist will require some such agent, for the accomplishment of his purposes, from among the Jews themselves, is apparent from the position which that people have hitherto held, and which they will then more particularly hold among the Gentiles. Looking for the Messiah with trust and confidence, unshaken by centuries of disappointment and degradation, but at this time renewed and confirmed by the tokens of God's returning favour in the restoration of all that a Jew looks forward to with undying hope, his city and his temple—in vain shall a Gentile

“all that dwell upon the earth” *shall worship him* (προσκυνήσουσι) except the very elect (v. 8). From which we would infer, as in the text, that the seduction of the Jews by the Antichrist and his agent, shall be subsequent to that of the Gentiles.

pretender seek to seduce them by lying wonders, to submit themselves to his pretensions and dominion, until the arch-enemy himself shall, by means of one that is to arise from among themselves, tempt or coerce them to fall down and worship the image of the Antichrist that he shall have set up. This is the Being here revealed to us, as the Beast coming up *out of the earth*, afterwards denominated the “False Prophet,” and who is thus described:—

“And I beheld another Beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the Beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* six hundred threescore *and* six.”

The first remarkable feature of this phenomenon, to which we shall direct our attention, is, that he comes up “*out of the earth* ;” whereas, the previous Beast arose “*out of the sea*.” We have before ob-

served (and the observation is of importance), that the expression “the earth” (the land, *η γη*), where it occurs as contra-distinguished from “the sea” (as in this place), denotes the Land of Promise, the Holy Land—the one denoting the territorial position of the Jews, and the other of the Gentiles. This is corroborated, in some degree, by the expression in the twelfth verse of the preceding chapter, “inhabitants of the earth and of the sea;” and also by the description of the new heavens and the new earth, which is to succeed the millennial dispensation, where it is said, “And there shall be no more sea,”—Rev. xxi. 1—signifying that at that period, there shall be no longer a peculiar and distinct people of God, neither Jew nor Gentile, but that the whole earth shall be comprised in the New Jerusalem. And again, the Prophet Isaiah uses the term as descriptive of the Gentile nations in his prophecy of the glory and pre-eminence of the Jewish Church in the latter days—“The abundance of *the sea* shall be converted unto thee, the forces of *the Gentiles* shall come unto thee.”—Is. lx. 5. This accords with our interpretation of the origin of the first Beast, the Antichrist, who is to arise out of the Gentile world (the sea), while the False Prophet, who is to be his agent in his dealings with the Jews, is to arise from among themselves, out of “the earth.”

Now, let us examine the description here given of the second Beast, or the False Prophet, and see how it accords with our interpretation of his being the agent of the Antichrist, whose office it is to seduce and coerce the Jews, or those “*that dwell on the*

earth," to worship or acknowledge the supremacy of the Antichrist :—" And he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him, and causeth *the earth and them that dwell therein* to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on *the earth* in the sight of men, and deceiveth *them that dwell on the earth* by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast, saying, *to them that dwell on the earth*, that they should make an image to the Beast, which had a wound by a sword, and did live."—v. 12-14. Here we see that all his operations are connected with "the earth," and "them that dwell on the earth." He "causeth *the earth and them that dwell therein*" to worship the first Beast; he "deceiveth *them that dwell on the earth* by miraculous prodigies, saying, *to them that dwell on the earth*, that they should make an image to the Beast." This language can scarcely be considered to be accidental, or without a special meaning; and if we are correct in attributing the expression "the earth," or "the land," to denote the Holy Land, it is clear that the machinations and proceedings of the second Beast, are to be directed against those that shall dwell therein, viz., the Jewish nation.

It is then added, that "he had power to give life unto the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed." This erection of an image of the Antichrist is, we conceive, the setting up of "the abomination

of desolation," spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, and referred to by our Saviour in his prophecy upon the Mount of Olives. It is clear, that by miraculous and diabolical agencies, the image shall be endued with life, for the purpose of luring the unfortunate Jews to turn from their expected Messiah to worship and submit themselves to the "Destroyer of the Gentiles." This will be the season of their last trial, denominated by the Prophet Daniel, and by the Saviour, as "the great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." And it is confirmed by the continuation of the Lord's prophecy—"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, lo! here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise *false Christs* and *false prophets*, and shall show *great signs and wonders*; insomuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the *very elect*."—Mat. xxiv. 21-24. Here there is a reference to the false Christs (the Anti-christ, or the first Beast) and to false prophets (the second Beast, which is afterwards styled "the False Prophet"), and to their miraculous signs and wonders; and here also, we find a reference to the "very elect," or those written in the Lamb's book (v. 8), who are to be the remnant that shall refuse to worship, or pay homage to, the arch-impostor.

The next part of the description of the second Beast is, that he shall institute a mark for his followers, so as to exclude from civil communion all who have not the mark, or the name of the Beast, or

the number of his name. We do not profess to explain the precise meaning of this part of the description ; but we would suggest, that those whom this False Prophet shall fail in seducing or coercing to worship the image of the Antichrist, shall be exposed to the temptation of yielding to a less glaring apostasy, in the adoption of some distinguishing mark, which shall operate as an admission of a mere political, though not a religious or divine, supremacy of the Antichrist. We are disposed to this inference by the words, “That no man might *buy or sell* save he that had the mark,” &c., intimating that it was no longer a question of life or death, but of civil or political advantages.

Such a descent from deadly persecution and coercion to sophistical flatteries and seductions, is, we think, conveyed in the description of the proceedings of the Antichrist with the Jews, in the eleventh chapter of Daniel :—“And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he *corrupt by flatteries* ; but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits ; and they that understand among the people shall instruct many ; yet they shall *fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil*, many days. And when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help ; but many shall cleave to them *with flatteries*. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to

the time of the end.”—Dan. xi. 31–35. Here there is manifestly a transition from the sword, flame, captivity, and spoil, to subtle flatteries, by which “some of understanding shall fall,” who, under persecution, were strong and did exploits, and instructed many. And looking round the world, even in the present days, we shall find the Devil, who is at all times consistent in his mode of warfare against the truth, seducing, by sophistical expediciencies, those whom the hottest flames of persecution would have failed to coerce to worship his image. How many are there in the present times, who would have defied the fires of the Inquisition, and have yielded up life itself, rather than have given their strength to the apostasy in the days of its power and persecutions; and yet, to advance some political object, have now received its mark on their right hands, and lent the best powers of their minds and bodies to forward its designs, and place it in a position every hour drawing nearer to supremacy.

Lastly, the Prophet announces—“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding, count the number of the Beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.” With respect to this number of the Beast, it is probable that until the Being arises to whom the number shall be applicable, it can never be fully understood; and that it will then be one of the circumstances, by which the suffering saints shall be strengthened and supported in their hour of trial. Were we to venture on a speculation with regard to it, we should be inclined to say that the title *αποστατης*, whose letters, ac-

according to Greek numerals, number 666,* was that to which the prophecy pointed. The first Beast, as the Antichrist, is an incarnation of the apostasy, which expands into open rebellion against God. He may, therefore, with propriety, be termed "the Apostate," an individual, whose number, therefore, is the number of a man. However, this is merely offered as a conjecture; our own impression being, that until the rise of the Antichrist, the number of his name will remain a mystery.

In corroboration of the foregoing interpretation of this prophecy as to the Jewish origin of the second Beast, or the False Prophet, we may observe, that it was a prevailing opinion among the Fathers of the Church,† that some such Anti-Messiah was to arise out of the tribe of Dan; and that opinion appears to have been founded on sound Scriptural grounds. The general supposition was, that the Being in question was to be the Antichrist himself; but this arose from their not having perceived the distinction between the first and second Beasts—the former of which is to be the Antichrist, the Gentile head of the Roman empire; and the latter, the False Prophet, of Jewish origin, who is to be the agent employed for the seduction and corruption of that people, as Menelaus was the agent and instrument of Antiochus Epiphanus in a similar work. With this distinction, all the Scriptural evidences will be found to be equally applicable to the

* α π ο ς α ρ η σ
1 80 70 6 1 300 8 200 = 666.

† "De tribu enim Dan Antichristus traditur nasciturus."—Primasius Sup. Apoc. c. xi.

proof that the False Prophet shall be of the tribe of Dan. These evidences have been collected by Mr. Govett in his "Revelation Literal and Unfulfilled," though he has fallen into the common error of concluding that the Antichrist is to be of Jewish origin. We shall here briefly enumerate them.

In the first place, Dan was an illegitimate son of Jacob, born of the concubine Bilhah, after the impious language of Rachel, which was reproved by her husband ; and on his birth, Rachel's ejaculation was, "God hath judged me." Moreover, the tribe of Dan was always encamped on the north (Numb. ii. 25), and its city was the most northern of those of Israel's tribes; and it is from the north, that the last great visitation is to descend upon Israel. Again, the tribe of Dan is omitted in the catalogue of the tribes in the seventh chapter of "the Revelation ;" and it may also be observed, that it appears from the Song of Deborah, that Dan did not come forward to the assistance of the Lord at the battle of Megiddo—from which it may be implied, that at the battle of Armageddon (supposed to be identical in locality with Megiddo), the same tribe will not be found among the armies of Christ, in their conflict with those of Antichrist. It also appears in Lev. xxiv. 10–16, that one of the tribe of Dan was found guilty of blasphemy against Jehovah, and put to death ; which is the only recorded instance of an Israelite having been convicted of such a crime. And again, we find in the eighteenth chapter of Judges, that the graven image was set up in Mount Ephraim by the children of Dan, and that the presiding priesthood thereto

were of that tribe. It is also recorded, that Dan was the place fixed on by Jeroboam, "who made Israel to sin," as the position for one of his golden calves; "and this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.—1 Kings, xii. 30.

In addition to these recorded instances of the tendency of this backsliding tribe to blasphemy and idolatry, we find the voice of prophecy sounding a similar note of warning. In the first place, the prophecy of Jacob with reference to that which should befall the tribe of Dan "in the last days," is of a similar import—"Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider falleth backwards."—Genesis, xlix. 1-16. From this it would appear, that from Dan is to spring the serpent which, in the form of the False Prophet, shall arrest the progress of the Jewish people to the final consummation of their glory "in the last days," and cause them to fall backwards. Again, in the following prophecy, the mention of the tribe of Dan in connexion with the invasion of Judea by the Antichrist in the latter days, is another evidence of our suggestions respecting them:—"Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from *the north*, and a great destruction. The lion is come up from his thicket, and the *destroyer of the Gentiles* is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make the land desolate. . . . For a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from Mount Ephraim."—Jer. iv. 6-15.

To the same effect, is the prophecy in the eighth chapter of Jeremiah, where we find the following passage :—"The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan : the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones ; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and all that is in it ; the city, and those that dwell therein. For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord.—Jer. viii. 16, 17. There is also a remarkable expression concerning the God of Dan, in the prophecies of Amos :—"They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy God, O Dan, liveth ; and the manner of Beer-sheba liveth ; even they shall fall, and never rise up again."—Amos, viii. 14. From these passages it is obvious, that from the tribe of Dan some enormity is, in all probability, to arise, who shall, like another Judas, be a blaspheming traitor, an idolatrous persecutor, and a stumbling-block to the Jewish people ; and we are not, therefore, as we conceive, without warrant in concluding, that out of this tribe shall spring "the False Prophet," who is to be the instrument and agent of the Antichrist, in setting up the abomination of desolation in the temple of Jerusalem, in the form of the animated image described in this revelation ; and in bringing the Jews to submit to his blasphemous pretensions, and to acknowledge his supremacy as the only God of the Universe.

These two Beasts are the beings portrayed in the prophecies of Daniel—one of them as the little horn that springs up among the ten horns on the fourth

Beast, or the Roman empire in its last stage ; and the other, as the little horn which springs out of the four horns of the He Goat, or the Grecian empire. The first of these is thus described :—" And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws : and they shall be given into his hands until a time, and times, and dividing of a time." The characteristics of this horn are exactly similar to those of the first Beast, viz., blasphemy, persecution, and great power ; and we may, therefore, conclude, that as they are both of them connected with " the fourth kingdom upon earth," and both of them to be destroyed by the Lord at his coming, that they are one and the same being. Again, the other little horn springs up among the four kingdoms which succeeded that of Alexander, of which Judea was territorially a part, and was to arise in the latter, or the last times, of their kingdom (Dan. viii. 23), which is to be prolonged till the destruction of the fourth kingdom (*ibid.* v. 12). The being predicted is thus described :—" A king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, *but not by his own power* : and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise, and shall destroy *the mighty and the holy people*. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand : and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by *peace* shall destroy many : he shall *also* stand up against the Prince of princes ; but he shall be broken without hand."—Dan. viii. 23-25. There is a remark-

able resemblance in many particulars between this Being thus described and the False Prophet—"His power shall be mighty, *but not by his own power*"—so the False Prophet "exerciseth the power of the first Beast (not his own power) before him." "He shall destroy wonderfully . . . and shall destroy *the mighty and the holy people* (the Jews). And through his policy he shall cause craft to prosper," &c. So, of the False Prophet, it is said, that "he deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth" (the Jews); and causeth "that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast, should be killed." Both of these work their ends by persecution and deceit—the scene of their operations shall be among the Jews—and both of them shall fall before the Lord at his second coming; and, therefore, we have some reason for concluding that they are identical. This harmony between the two prophecies is a strong additional circumstance in favour of our foregoing interpretations. See also, Isaiah, xxvii. 1, where the Lord is represented as punishing the "*crooked serpent*" (the False Prophet), and slaying "*the Dragon that is in the sea*" (the Antichrist).*

The Old Testament episode of the proceedings of Balak and Balaam with the people of Israel, will be found to be an illustration, and has, no doubt, been

* We suggested in "The Latter Days," that the little horn of the fourth Beast symbolized the Papacy, and that the little horn of the He Goat symbolized the Mahometan power, which has arisen in the East; but our subsequent study of the two Beasts of the Revelations, has led us to the conclusion in the text.

recorded for our learning, as a type, of these proceedings of the two Beasts of the Apocalypse. Balak was the infidel King of the Moabites—Balaam was a Prophet of the Lord; and yet Balak, in carrying out his project of subjugating the Jews, and withdrawing them from their allegiance to God, employed this false prophet to further his designs, as the first Beast will employ the second Beast, or False Prophet, to coerce and seduce the people of Israel in the latter days. Moreover, we find that though Balak was restrained from open violence against Israel, yet that Balaam “taught him to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication” (Rev. ii. 14), in the seduction of the Israelites to idolatry, and fornication with the daughters of Moab, as recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of the Book of Numbers. So, in like manner, the False Prophet of the Apocalypse “*deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth,*” “*saying to them that dwell upon the earth, that they should make an image to the Beast.*”

This analogy between the past, as recorded in Scripture history, and the future, as predicted in the Apocalypse, is confirmed by what followed, when Moses was summoned by God to “avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites;” for he was directed to levy a chosen band of Israelites, of every tribe one thousand, who slew the kings of Midian and their hosts, without the loss of one man of the 12,000.—Numb. xxxi. 49. So, at the opening of the next succeeding vision of the Apocalypse, we are presented with a band of 144,000 ($12 \times 12,000$),

who are described as a chosen and selected company of the faithful; and whose leading characteristic is, that "they are they which are not defiled with women," in evident allusion, in a spiritual sense, to the fornication of the Israelites with the daughters of Moab. These analogies between the recorded events of the past, and the predicted events of the future, warrant us, to some extent, in reading the one as typical of the other; and if so, they strongly corroborate the view which we have taken of the meaning of the vision of the two Beasts, viz., that the first will be an infidel Gentile king, typified by the Moabite King Balak; and the second, or False Prophet, his Israelitish agent, typified by the false prophet Balaam.*

Before concluding our comments on this all-important part of the Apocalypse, we shall make a few observations respecting the interpretations of it which have prevailed among commentators, and which appear to us to be wholly untenable, and inconsistent with the language of the Revelation. The interpretation to which we allude, and which has been adopted by the most respected and influential writers who have written on the subject, is, that the first Beast denotes the secular, and the second Beast the ecclesiastical, Roman dynasty. These same authors, among whom are included the names of Newton, Faber, and Cunningham, concur also in interpreting the second Beast, or the False Prophet, and the Scarlet Whore, as being identical, and each of them

* See Kelly's Apoc. Interp., vol. ii. p. 285.

symbolic of Popery. Now, not to dwell on the inconsistency and impropriety of symbolizing Popery, or any other system, by a ten-horned Beast in one part of the prophecy, and by a Woman riding on a ten-horned Beast in another, we would call especial attention to the revealed fact, that the two-horned Beast, or False Prophet, outlives Popery; because we are told by the Angel, in the seventeenth chapter, that the ten kings shall desolate and burn the Whore with fire, for that God hath put it into their hearts to give their kingdom to the Beast—while it is revealed in the nineteenth chapter, that the Beast and the False Prophet are *afterwards* taken, and cast into the brimstone lake together, by the Lord himself at his coming. So that the False Prophet survives the Scarlet Whore, or Popery, and yet is, according to their interpretations, Popery itself. This fact of the False Prophet being destroyed subsequent to the extermination of the Papacy, appears likewise from the song of triumph at the commencement of the nineteenth chapter, which precedes the announcement of the marriage of the Lamb, and his coming with his saints, to encounter and subdue the Beast and False Prophet. This is a contradiction which cannot, as we conceive, be explained away; and of itself sufficient to establish the unsoundness of the interpretations which identify the False Prophet with Popery.

Mr. Elliott, in his "*Horæ Apocalypticæ*," interprets the first Beast to be the succession of Popes—the False Prophet, to be the Papal clergy—and the Scarlet Whore, to be the Papal Church: and thus, if his view be correct, consistently with the language

of the prophecy, the Papal Church is to be wholly extinguished, being made desolate, and naked, and burned with fire by the ten kings, in order that they may give their kingdoms unto the Beast (the succession of Popes)—while the Beast and False Prophet, or the Pope and his Clergy, whose church and city have just been swept away by the ten kings, are to enter into close alliance with the same ten kings, and to be afterwards taken and destroyed with them on the field of Armageddon. This difficulty did not escape the observation of Mr. Elliott; and he has endeavoured to explain it away by several suggestions, not very consistent with each other, and wholly at variance with the language of the prophecy.

First.—He states, that “the predictive clause (v. 16) must be understood of the locality or city; not of the Church so far associated with it; the Apostate Church’s False Prophet being to the last in company with the Beast.”* This is a *petitio principii*, assuming the question in dispute. But there is not anything in the prophetic announcement that warrants us in confining the destruction of the Whore to the destruction of the city. Whatever the Whore represents (and according to Mr. Elliott, she represents the Papal Church) is to be wholly extinguished; for no more appropriate language could be used by the Prophet, to express the utter extinction of all that is symbolized by the Whore; and not only is her final extermination by the ten kings predicted in terms that cannot be intended to convey

* Hor. Apoc., p. 1256.

anything else, but she does not again appear on the scene, nor is she again mentioned, except in the song of rejoicing of the people in heaven, at the commencement of the nineteenth chapter, for the judgment which had befallen her.

Secondly.—Mr. Elliott, alluding to the downfall of the Whore, “*towards the end of her career*, from the ten kings,” adds, that there is an intimation also “of her partial recovery therefrom prior to final destruction.”* But for this position there is no warrant whatever in the book of “the Revelation.” In the announcement of the destruction of the Whore, utter and final destruction is predicted; and, as we have observed before, the only subsequent mention that is made of her, is in the song of triumph for her downfall, which precedes the prophetic description of the extermination of all the remaining systems or forms of iniquity which have been introduced in the scenery of the Apocalypse.

Thirdly.—Alluding to the destruction of the Beast and False Prophet, Mr. Elliott suggests, that “†the circumstances of their destruction following after, and so being in point of time distinct from that of Rome, is accounted for on the supposition of Antichrist and his army being, at the time, gathered to some country or place *without* the territories of the Popedom.” But how is this consistent with Mr. Elliott’s interpretation, that the Whore is the Papal Church, and the prophetic declaration that her extermination by the ten kings is for the purpose of

* Hor. Apoc., p. 1260.

† *Ibid.*, p. 1278.

giving their kingdom to the Beast (the Pope); and who, with the False Prophet (the Papal clergy), is afterwards found in close alliance with the same ten kings on the field of Armageddon? Can it be contended, that the meaning of the prophecy is, that the ten kings are to extinguish the Papal Church and City, in order to confer pre-eminence on the Pope and the Papal clergy—unless, indeed, this Pope shall have abandoned his nominal allegiance to Christ, and assumed the rebellious attitude and titles of “the Antichrist,” in open defiance of God and his Christ, as he is there represented? Then, indeed, will the language of the prophecy be consistent throughout; and the Beast of the thirteenth chapter will represent, not the Popedom, or the succession of Popes, but the natural development of Popery—open and avowed Antichristianity, and an open and avowed Antichrist.

It is clear, therefore, that these suggestions of Mr. Elliott are only put forward to support the foregone conclusion, that the two Beasts are respectively the succession of Popes and the Papal clergy; and do violence to the language and structure of the prophecy. No such difficulties present themselves in the view which we have taken of its meaning and import. As we have endeavoured to explain the divine revelation, the first Beast is the Antichrist—the second Beast is his ally, or agent, of Jewish origin, by whose power and craft the restored people of Israel are to be persecuted or seduced, and, with the exception of the very elect, to be coerced or deceived into submission to, or acknowledgment of, his blas-

phemous pretensions—while the Scarlet Whore, we shall find to be the precursory apostasy, “the mystery of iniquity,” that has its seat in the metropolis of the Roman dynasty throughout this dispensation; and from whose ashes shall spring the Antichrist, who, openly denying the Father and the Son, shall no longer content himself with the office and title of “The Vicar of Christ on earth,” but proclaim himself to be “the King of Kings and Lord of Lords;” and whose seat shall be no longer at Rome, but, in imitation and assumption of the kingdom of Christ, “he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain,” at Jerusalem, when “he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”—Dan. xi. 45.

It is difficult to conceive how any person, holding the doctrine of the premillennial advent of Christ, and the literal destruction of his enemies on the mountains of Israel at the time of the end, can, at the same time, hold that these two Beasts can primarily symbolize anything but individuals. The Beast, as he appears in the nineteenth chapter, is either an individual—it may be the last of the Popes, after the extinction of his Church and City—or the succession of Popes. But as he is to be taken and cast *alive* into the lake of fire, the succession of Popes cannot be there symbolized. Consequently, the Beast of the nineteenth chapter symbolizes an individual. And, if so, must not the same Beast, when presented to our view in the thirteenth chapter, also symbolize the same individual, and one that is yet to arise? more especially, as a similar fate is pre-

dicted for him in that chapter, viz., "to go into *captivity*," as that which befalls him on the field of Armageddon, in the nineteenth chapter, viz., to be taken, and cast *alive* into the brimstone lake. The same reasoning applies to the second Beast, or False Prophet, to prove that it also symbolizes an individual.

We have dwelt on this subject of the nature of these two Beasts more particularly, as we conceive it to be one of paramount importance to a right understanding of the whole book of "the Revelation," and of the principles on which our interpretations of it are to be founded. For if the seven-headed and ten-horned Beast of the thirteenth chapter portrays an individual yet to arise, it is clear that Mr. Elliott's scheme of interpretation must fall to the ground, inasmuch as the Beast who is to slaughter the two witnesses, as predicted in the eleventh chapter, being identical with that in the thirteenth chapter, has not yet appeared in the world. Consequently, Mr. Elliott's interpretation, and all the other interpretations, in which the slaughter of the two witnesses as a past event, is not only a chief, but a necessary ingredient, must be abandoned. This will appear more fully hereafter, in our comments on the nineteenth chapter of "the Revelation."

CHAPTER V.

THE REFINEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

“ Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”—MAT. iii. 12.

THE chapter of “the Revelation” which is about to occupy our attention, we shall find to contain a prophecy of events, the object and effect of which are to be similar to those adumbrated in the opening of the seals. The events prefigured in the opening of the seals, are, in the view which we took of them, destined by God to be the means of refining and separating God's elect among the Jewish people, from the wickedness with which they shall be mingled in the latter days—the days of their restoration to their own land, and of reconciliation with their offended God—when he shall have renewed his covenant with them for the last remaining of the seventy weeks of their duration as a Church and a nation, previous to the coming of the Messiah to reign over them on Mount Zion, as predicted in the ninth chapter of Daniel. In like manner, the prophecy which we are

about to examine, is a prediction of the refining process by which God shall, in the latter days of this dispensation, separate the purity of the Gentile Christian Church from the mass of impurity and corruption with which it shall be mingled.

“And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”—Rev. xiv. 1–5.

This branch of the prophecy opens with a revelation of 144,000, having the name of their FATHER written on their foreheads, who were introduced in the previous part of the Revelation, as sealed up (c. vii. 4–8); and whom we explained to be those faithful Jews, who, during the former dispensation, and during the continuance of God's primitive Church, having seen the promises afar off, embraced them, and have received the blessings of redemption through the blood of their Saviour. The description here given of them confirms this interpretation. They are, in the first place, described as having the name of the Lamb's FATHER upon their foreheads—not the name

of Christ himself, who had not come into the world at the period of their conflicts and labours on earth. They are also represented as singing "*as it were* a new song." The "*new song*" which the Beasts and elders are represented as singing before the Lamb in the ninth verse of the fifth chapter, is the song of redemption. "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation, and people; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Now, the 144,000 are here described, not as singing the "*new song*," but "*as it were* a new song;" denoting that their redemption was, in some manner, different from the redemption of those who have received, and shall receive, redemption under the new dispensation. Christ died for those that were under the law, as well as for those who have never been under the law; but the revelation before us tells us, that the song of redemption of the former is not to be learned by any of the latter—all which is very intelligible, if we consider that there may be some distinction between the redemption of those, who, like the band of faithful Israelites described in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, embraced the promises afar off, and before fulfilment, and those who have embraced the promises when fulfilled.

They are also described as virgins, and undefiled with women, which denotes their freedom from the gross apostasies which characterised their rebellious nation—apostasy being always designated in Scrip-

ture as fornication and harlotry. The description also of their being redeemed from among men, "being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb," confirms this view; for the Prophet Jeremiah declares that "Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the *"first-fruits of his increase"* (Jer. ii. 3); and St. James, addressing the twelve tribes scattered abroad, calls them a *kind of first-fruits of his creatures.*"—St. James, i. 18.

Having thus introduced the Jewish or primitive Church of God, purified and separate from the dross of iniquity with which it had been mingled, the prophecy goes on to disclose the refinement or purification of the Gentile, or new dispensation, branch of the same.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people: saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sun, and the fountains of water.—Rev. xiv. 6, 7.

This passage not only reveals the subject matter of the prophecy, but also the period of the fulfilment of the events foreshadowed in this part of the prophetic vision, to be at the close of the present dispensation; for, independent of the declaration that the hour of God's judgment is come, our Lord himself has declared, in Matthew, xxiv. 14—"And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and *then* shall the end come;" showing that as soon as the Gospel should

have been preached to all nations *for a witness, then should the end come*. This fixes the period of the events we are about to contemplate, to be the close of the present dispensation, and the subject matter of the prophecy to be the Christian Church.

“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the Beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”—Rev. xiv. 8–13.

This passage discloses the process of refining the Church, in separating the purity from the impurities of the same, in like manner as we traced* the imagery of the second, third, and fourth seals, to be a revelation of the refinement of the Jewish branch of God's Church, in the latter days, by the separation of those who could not, like Noah, withstand the temptations of the world; or like Job, the temptations of the Devil; or like Daniel, the allurements of the carnal spirit, seducing the professor from obedience to the

* “The Latter Days,” pp. 81–84.

positive law of God, which was added to the Jew until the seed should come to whom the promise was made. In the same manner, we shall find the prophecy under our consideration, to be an adumbration of the refinement of the Christian Church, by cutting off from it those who shall be unable to withstand the peculiar temptations to which the Christian is exposed, for the trial of his faith and steadfastness in Gospel truth.

These peculiar temptations or trials to which the Christian, as such, is exposed, are declared by our Saviour in his explanation of the parable of the sower:—"The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the *way side*, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, *Satan cometh* immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on *stony ground*; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when *affliction or persecution* ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown *among thorns*; such as hear the word, and *the cares of this world*, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on *good ground*; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred."—Mark, iv. 14-20. Thus, the three trials of the Christian Church are here disclosed to be—the World, the Devil, and Tribula-

tions or Persecutions. Consequently, we may expect, that in a revelation of the purification of the Christian Church, there should be a disclosure of the cutting off of its enemies, viz., the World, and the Devil, and the cessation of Persecutions; and this it is, which we shall find to be revealed in the imagery before us.

Babylon of "the Revelation," or, as it is commonly termed, the Mystic Babylon, though it has been, for the most part, interpreted as only designatory of Popery, is, we conceive, also symbolical of the first of the foregoing enemies of Christianity, viz., the World—by which is denoted all that exists in creation, the love of which withdraws us from the love of God, and which is thus defined by St. John—"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the World:" thus dividing all that is in creation into two classes—those of the Father, and those of the World—God and Mammon. If we consider the nature of the literal Babylon in itself, and in its position relative to God's people, as revealed in Scripture, and recorded in history, the propriety of the meaning which we have given to it will be more apparent. Its peculiar characteristics were wealth, luxury, pomp, and power—all that could minister to the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life; and with regard to God's chosen and separate people, the Jews, it is everywhere introduced in Scripture as the overwhelming flood that was ever threatening to swallow them up. The Jews and Babylon stood in the same relation to each other,

in the Old Testament Scriptures, as God's people and the people of the World do at the present moment ; and if the Jew was a type of the faithful Christian, so, therefore, is Babylon an appropriate type of the World, or of all in the sublunary creation, the love of which is distinct from the love of God.

The third Angel, in the passage before us, denounces and depicts the final destruction of the worshippers and adherents of the Beast and his image, *i. e.*, the Antichrist (the incarnation of the Devil) and his followers, as explained in the preceding chapter. This denunciation of the third Angel is, therefore, predictive of the cutting off of apostasy, the deceits of the Devil, as that of the second was of the deceits of the World.

The succeeding announcement by the Prophet of that which the Voice from heaven declared, is very similar to the imagery of the fifth seal, with which, according to our scheme of interpretation, it is synchronical, or nearly so ; and is, we conceive, like it, a revelation of tribulation and persecutions of the saints of God—*“Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”* The force of this passage rests on the phrase, *“from henceforth,”* as denoting a peculiarity of blessing to those, who, from that period, shall die in the Lord ; and which can only arise from the magnitude of the labours or persecutions from which they shall be withdrawn, inasmuch as all who die in the Lord are blessed.

Thus, the announcement of the three Angels, and

of the Voice from heaven, is a revelation of the sowing of the seed of God's Word through all the earth, and the cutting off or separation from the good ground, of the thorny soil of the World, the way side soil, where the snares of the Devil are laid, and the stony ground in which Persecutions offend; and this series of prophetic images fully discloses the refinement of God's Church of this dispensation. Where the seed is sown, if it falls not on good soil, it falls on thorny ground—on the way side—or on stony places; that is to say, according to the Saviour's explanation, it may fall on worldly minds, where it is choked at once—or on minds that are not worldly, but which the Devil may have power to deceive and pervert into apostasies—or on minds that are neither worldly nor to be deceived into apostasies, but over which the Devil may, nevertheless, prevail, by persecutions and afflictions; and more especially, by those awful persecutions which are to be introduced in the days of "the great tribulation"—the days of the Antichrist. All these instruments, by which the fruits of Gospel truth are blighted in the hearts of the hearers of the Word in this dispensation, are depicted in the foregoing revelation; and the warnings of the Angels, and of the Voice from heaven, are intended, we conceive, to convey predictions of the refining process by which God's Church is to be purified before the coming of the Saviour.

"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on

the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap ; for the time is come for thee to reap ; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth ; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire ; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."—Rev. xiv. 14–20.

The imagery of the Harvest and Vintage is a revelation of the judicial sifting of the Gentile nations, and which is also revealed in the opening of the sixth seal, being introduced in both revelations, as immediately succeeding "the great tribulation," or persecution of the faithful, whether Jew or Gentile, by the Antichrist. It is evidently a parallel prophecy to that in the third chapter of the prophecies of Joel :—
"For behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. . . Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles ; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near ; let them come up : beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears : let the weak say I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come,

all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about : hither cause thy mighty men to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat ; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe : come, get you down ; the winepress is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision ; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.* The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord, also, shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem ; and the heavens and the earth shall shake ; but the Lord shall be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain ; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.”

This divine proceeding of gathering in the Harvest, described in both of these prophecies, portrays the gathering of the faithful into the kingdom of God, as our Lord himself has described it, immediately after the parable of the sower:—“ And he said, so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground ; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself ; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, *because the harvest is come.*”—Mark, iv. 26-29.

While, on the other hand, the imagery of the Vintage and Winepress is used by the Prophet Isaiah in the parallel prophecy of the Lord coming in vengeance, to destroy and trample on his ungodly enemies:—
 “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have *trod-den the winepress alone*; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.”—Isa. lxiii. 1–5.

The parallel prophecy in Joel, to which we have referred, furnishes the particulars of the time and place of this divine visitation. We are told, in the commencement, that it is to take place *after the restoration of Judah and Jerusalem*, and the scene of it to be *the valley of Jehosaphat in the Holy Land*. This is corroborated by the description of the position of the Winepress in the concluding paragraph of the passage of the Revelation, now under our consideration:—
 “And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs;” for it has been remarked by some writers, that this is the exact measure of the extent of Palestine, which is to be the scene of this

last consummation of God's retributive wrath on the Gentile nations, whom he has used as instrumental in scourging his own people Israel, but who shall, in their turn, as in the instances of Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria, be visited by the retributive wrath of God (Is. xxii. 23), as more fully revealed in the portents of the seven vials.

Thus, we have disclosed to us, in the chapter of "the Revelation" which we have been considering, a series of prophetic images, analogous in their object and effect, and, as we conceive, synchronous in time, to the events predicted in the imagery of the opening of the seals—the object and effect of both being the refinement and purification of the Church of God; that of the seals relating to the Jewish Church, and that in the interpretation of which we have been engaged, relating to the Christian or Gentile branch, previous to their final amalgamation in the one glorious and triumphant Church of God upon earth, which will take place on the reception of the Saviour coming in the clouds of heaven to his mourning and repentant people Israel.

If this view be correct, the events portrayed in the imagery of the Vintage are analogous to, and synchronize with, the opening of the seventh seal, which, as we have observed, and obviously, from the structure of the prophecy, embraces within it the events portrayed in the seven trumpets. So here the Vintage and Winepress is a concentrated prophecy of the retributive wrath of God on the several iniquities of the Gentile Church, which is more fully detailed in the portents of the seven vials; or, in

other words, the seven vials are an enlarged portrait or description of the treading of the winepress.

But before we proceed further, it will conduce to the elucidation of the subject, to revert to the several parts of the prophecy before us, and which is, like the imagery of the seals with reference to the Jewish branch of the Church, a prophetic vision of the refinement and purification in the latter days of the Gentile Church of God, or “the remnant that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus.” In other words, the separation of the children of God from the children of the World and of the Devil, which, like the process of the seals, is sevenfold.

First.—We have a Revelation of the 144,000, or the holy band of the faithful patriarchs of Israel, who saw and embraced the promises afar off; and have received the blessings of redemption, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Second.—We are presented with a Revelation of the Gospel preached to all nations as a witness, so that those who believe might be saved, and those that believe not might be damned; and which, as appears from our Lord’s prediction, in Matt. xxiv. 14, brings us to the time of the end, or the latter days.

Third.—In the Angel’s declaration of the destruction of the mystic Babylon, we behold in the warning the cutting off from the Church of the children of *the World*, or the *thorny places* where the seed was sown.

Fourth.—The denunciation of the worshippers and

adherents of the Beast and his image, presents us, in the warning of the effects of apostasy, with a prophetic picture of the cutting off of the children of *the Devil*, out of whose *way-side hearts* the enemy of mankind has taken the seed of the Word that had fallen there.

Fifth.—In the declaration of the Voice from heaven of the blessedness of those who depart, “*from henceforth,*” in the Lord, is adumbrated the Anti-christian *persecution*, which, in the latter days, shall prove whether the seed was sown on good ground, or on the *stony places* where it had no root.

Sixth.—The Harvest discloses the gathering in of the faithful, when the fruit shall be ripe; and

Seventh.—The Vintage and the Winepress, the trampling of the enemies of God in his final fury, as more fully to be developed in the portents of the seven vials.

The foregoing summary shows, at a glance, the analogy, and the similarity in object and effect, between the séptenary of events prefigured in the imagery of this section of the Apocalypse, and those prefigured in the opening of the seals. This will appear more clearly as we proceed in our exposition of the imagery in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PURGING OUT OF INIQUITY.

“For the day of vengeance is in mine hand, and the year of my redeemed is come.”—Is. lxiii. 4.

PREVIOUS to the prophetic demonstration of God's retributive wrath on the several impurities of the Jewish branch of his Church, as revealed in the imagery of the seven trumpets, we were presented with a picture of the safety and blessedness of the purified portion of the same, in the revelation of the sealed 144,000, and the great multitude that no man could number, who had passed through the Anti-christian tribulation, and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. In the same manner, before the Prophet discloses the final outpouring of God's wrath on the Gentile nations, in the portents of the seven vials, we are, in the chapter we are about to consider, furnished with a similar revelation of the safety and blessedness of the purified members of the Church, which have been gathered into the garners of Christ in the preceding imagery of the Harvest. This is

the general outline of the chapter before us, and which we now proceed to examine in detail :—

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues ; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire : and them that had gotten the victory over the Beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made manifest.”—*Rev. xv. 1-4.*

Here we have the array of those who shall be subjected to, and triumphant over, all the trials which have been revealed to be put in force by the Dragon, against “the remnant who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus,” viz., the Beast and his image, his mark, and the number of his name. They are represented as standing on the “sea of glass, mingled with fire,” having apparently passed through, and emerged from it. The sea of glass is, as we have before explained, typical of the blood of Christ, that cleanseth from all sin ; and, therefore, the “sea of glass mingled with fire,” through which the triumphant Christians have passed, is typical of their baptism “with the Holy Ghost, and with fire,” as predicted in *Matt. iii. 11*, gathering the wheat into his garners, and burning up the chaff with fire unquenchable.

This sacred throng are heard to sing “the song of

Moses and of the Lamb.” The first is the song of rejoicing for their deliverance from the awful persecutions of Pharaoh’s antitype, the Antichrist, and which is preserved in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus ; and the song of the Lamb is the song of praise and thanksgiving to the Saviour and Redeemer, who has led them through the red sea of persecutions and afflictions in safety.

This song of the redeemed, as connected with the impending wrath of God, or the wickedness which is about to be swallowed up in the outpouring of the seven vials, is revealed in a parallel prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah :—“ Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy ; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is a devouring fire. And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity ; and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err. *Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept ;* and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel. And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones. For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod. And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps : and in

battles of shaking will he fight with it. For Tophet is ordained of old ; yea, for *the King* it is prepared : he hath made it deep and large ; the pile thereof is fire and much wood ; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.”—Is. xxx. 27-33.

Here we have, in the first place, *the solemn song* and gladness of heart of the redeemed and triumphant Christian, followed, as in the passage of “the Revelation” before us, with the lighting down of God’s arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire ; and in the thirty-third verse, the Prophet proceeds to declare the special judgment on the head and front of all this accumulation of iniquity and rebellion, the Anti-christ—“For Tophet is ordained of old ; yea, for **THE KING** it is prepared.” This is evidently a parallel prophecy to those now under our consideration.

“And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened : and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four Beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power ; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.”—Rev. xv. 5-8.

The prophetic incident of the temple being filled with smoke from the glory of God, leads us to two recorded instances of a similar character in the Old Testament history, which will be found of assistance

in unfolding the nature of the events which are here foreshadowed. The first of these is to be found in the last chapter of the Book of Exodus, which describes the completion of the tabernacle of the testimony by Moses, and the entry of the glory of God into it:—"And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work. *Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.* And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle."—Exodus, xl. 33-35. The other passage to which we have alluded, is the description of the events which took place on the completion and dedication of the temple, by Solomon, where, after recording the induction of the Ark of the Lord into the most holy place, the sacred historian proceeds:—"And it came to pass when the priests were come out of the holy place, &c. . . . that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; *for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.*"—2 Chron. v. 11-14. Thus, on the occasion of the completion of the tabernacle of the testimony, and of its antitype, the Temple of Jerusalem, the glory of the Lord filled them like a cloud, so as to prevent the entry of any person therein. In like manner, the filling of the symbolic temple of the Apocalypse with "the smoke from the glory of the Lord," denotes the completion of that temple of the

Most High, of which both the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the same glorious Temple of Solomon, were but the types and shadows, viz., the glorified and triumphant Church of Christ, which has frequently been described by the Apostles as a temple of which believers are the stones, and which is not to be complete until every separate stone shall have been perfected, and fitted into its peculiar place.

This prophetic imagery, therefore, fully corroborates and confirms the view which we have been hitherto taking of this section of the Apocalypse; for if, as we have been explaining, the Harvest of the preceding chapter denoted the gathering in of the believers into the garners of their Saviour, it is manifest that the number of the elect has been completed, that all the living stones of Christ's Church have been shaped out and fitted into their appropriate places, and that it is ready for his visible entrance into it, as symbolized by the imagery before us of "the smoke of the glory of the Lord" filling the temple.

From this perfected temple, which is filled with the presence of Christ, go forth the seven angels, bearing the vials of his retributive wrath on the severed iniquity and impurity with which his Church had been hitherto mingled; and the outpourings of which are to sweep it away into the unquenchable fire, with which God is to burn up the chaff when separated from the wheat, which is to be laid up in his garners of everlasting blessedness and purity.

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath

of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and was, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the Beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three

parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."—Rev. xvi.

The chaff of wickedness having been severed from the wheat of righteousness, which has been laid up in the garner of Christ, as revealed in the last chapter, we now come to consider the outpourings of the last vials of God's wrath. These we shall find to be prophetic of the extermination of the separated iniquity, or, as described by our Saviour, the burning up of the chaff with unquenchable fire. This process is strictly analogous to that portrayed in the symbols of the trumpets, which was the extermination of the wickedness in the Jewish branch of God's Church—while that of the vials portrays the extermination of the same ingredients which are now, and will continue to be, mingled with the Gentile Church, until the very last times of this dispensation. The series of events predicted in both are, we conceive, synchronical; the one, as we have before stated, being predictive of the last judgments on the iniquity of the Jewish branch, while the other is predictive of the last judgments on the iniquity of the Gentile branch, of God's Church. A glance at their respective subject matters will be sufficient to satisfy us of their synchronism.

The subjects of the first four visitations of the trumpets and of the vials respectively, are *the earth*—

the sea—the fountains and rivers—and the celestial bodies. The subject of the fifth trumpet is the flood of *Antichristian infidelity*; and that of the fifth vial, which is poured out on the seat of the Beast (the Antichrist) is manifestly the same. The portents of the sixth trumpet, and those of the sixth vial, are connected respectively with the *river Euphrates*. The seventh trumpet, announcing the commencement of the millennial reign, and the proclamation, on the outpouring of the seventh vial, of the completion of the present dispensation—"It is done"—together with the accompaniments, common to both, of lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, and hail, lead to the conclusion, that the events predicted in both are synchronical. Thus the subject matters of these two classes of prophecied events being identical, and the termination of both, viz., the close of this dispensation and the commencement of the next, being also identical, we have every reason to conclude that they will commence at the same time—and if so, they are obviously parallel predictions of the same events, or predictions respectively of parallel events.

While, however, we have arrived at the conclusion, that the object and effect of these portents, are the purification of the Christian Church, and the cutting off of the mass of impurities which shall have been separated from it, we do not profess to be able to give any specific explanation *of the nature and particulars of the events themselves*, which are still in the womb of futurity. It would appear, however, that these agents of Satan, the Beast and the False Prophet, will be the instruments of God's vengeance on the great

body of their followers, and then become themselves the victims of the Divine wrath. Into minute speculations of the manner and time of these events, we shall not enter; it is sufficient for us to be thus warned, that though infidelity and apostasy shall, as the days of this dispensation are drawing to a close, increase in extent and power, yet that Christ will, at length, going forth conquering and to conquer, crush and exterminate the iniquitous confederacy, and sweep them from the earth, in "the battle of the great day of God Almighty."

Babylon and the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet, are the forms of evil which are to be swept away in the outpourings of the Seven Vials—and the succeeding chapter of "the Revelation" we shall find to be an expanded detail of this retributive wrath of the Almighty on these concentrations of the iniquity of this dispensation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SCARLET WHORE.

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.”—2 THESS. xi. 7.

WITH the seven last plagues, as the outpourings of the seven vials are termed in “the Revelation,” xv. 1, in which shall be swept away the impurity and dross which are to be separated from the Church of God by the previous process of refinement, portrayed in the announcements and proceedings of the angels revealed in the fourteenth chapter, the time for the opening of the millennial or new dispensation has arrived. Before, however, the glorious scene is revealed to the Prophet, he is presented with three distinct visions, which occupy respectively the next three chapters. The first of these is the judgment of the Great Whore—the second, commencing with the distinctive announcement, “after these things I saw, &c.,” is a revelation of the final destruction of Babylon—and the third, which also commences with a similar declaration, is a revelation of the final conflict with, and conquest of, the Beast and False Prophet, or the two Beasts revealed in the thirteenth chapter.

These three distinct and separate revelations, we conceive to be special prophetic announcements of the final destruction or subjugation of the enemies of God's Church, which, as we have explained in our interpretation of the fourteenth chapter, were to be separated from the Church by the refining process therein adumbrated, whatever that process might be; and which were afterwards swept away in the outpouring of the seven vials. These enemies of the Church, we traced, from the parable of the sower, to be Apostasy, or the deceits of the Devil—the deceits of the World—and Persecutions; and these three are here specially alluded to under the respective figures of the Scarlet Whore, Babylon, and the Beast, with his Jewish agent, the False Prophet, which may be described as, respectively, the exponents of Spiritual Apostasy, Political Apostasy, and the open manifestation of both.

Before we come to the separate consideration of each of these prophetic symbols, we would observe, that, in considering the destruction of those adversaries of God's Church, we must never lose sight of the important consideration, that they are here presented to us in the last form in which they shall be found before their final extermination. Nor must we forget, that in Rome, the revived fourth kingdom upon earth, which is to be smitten and crushed by the Stone, previous to its expansion into Christ's kingdom over the whole world, is to be embodied and condensed all the iniquity that is to be swept away in the final conflict between Christ and Antichrist. Consequently, when apostasy, in the state

in which it shall be finally destroyed and swept away, is presented to us, it is to be expected that it will be in the form of the most manifest, permanent, and extensive of all apostasies, and which will, in the end, swallow up or concentrate in itself all other apostasies, viz., the apostasy of the Church of Rome. And also, when a revelation of the Deceits of the World, in their last form, is to be given to us, a picture of "all that is in the World, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (St. John, ii. 15), as existing in Rome, or mystic Babylon, the head-quarters of the apostasy, will be disclosed. Keeping these remarks in view, we shall now proceed to examine the prophecy of the Judgment of the Great Whore :—

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither ; I will show unto thee the judgment of the Great Whore that sitteth upon many waters : with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness : and I saw a Woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured Beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the Woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication : And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus : and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel ? I will tell thee the mystery of the Woman, and of the Beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The Beast that thou sawest was,

and is not ; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition : and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the Beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings : five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the Beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings : and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the Whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the Whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the Beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the Woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."—Rev. xvii.

Three matters are presented for our consideration in this prophetic announcement—first, the Great Whore ; second, the Beast on which she sat ; and third, the final destruction of the Whore. These we shall examine separately.

First.—There is no prophecy in this Book, in the interpretation of which there appears to have been so much harmony among Protestant commentators, as the one now under our consideration ; and it is a source of heartfelt satisfaction to us to have arrived

at the conclusions respecting its precise meaning and intent, which have so long prevailed among the members of our Church. We conceive, with them, that this "Great Whore that sitteth upon many waters," is the Romish apostasy. A woman, in Scripture imagery, has always been symbolical of a Church. In the Book of Psalms, in the Proverbs, in Solomon's Song, and the writings of the Prophets, we find the Church so represented ; and, in consistency with that symbol, a faithless or apostate Church is properly symbolized by a harlot.

This faithless Woman, then, being an apostate Church, we have no difficulty in identifying or connecting her with Rome. In the first place, the Beast on which she sits, is the Roman dynasty, pourtrayed under its well-known symbol of the seven-headed and ten-horned monster. The imagery of her sitting on it, denotes, that during her existence in this state, she exercises power and control in and over the seat of the Roman empire, which has been hitherto verified by the events of history. Another evidence is to be found in the titles stamped on her forehead—first, "Mystery," denoting her as a "mystery of iniquity," or secret agent of Satan—Christian in her profession, but infidel in her practice ; second, Babylon, the worldly enemy of God's people ; third, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth—the chief of all the apostasies and idolatries of Christendom. How true these are, as regards Popery, we need not pause to explain more fully.

The next description is, that St. John "saw the Woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and

with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus ;” and to this the Prophet adds, “and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” The annals of every nation in Europe can attest how copiously the blood of saints and martyrs has been already shed by Papal Rome ; and the astonishment expressed by St. John is, as well observed by Vitrunga, conclusive, that the martyrdoms of heathen Rome were not here presented to his view, as he was no stranger to them. But to find a professing Christian power drunk with the blood of the saints might well excite his amazement.

In addition to these evidences of the identity of the Harlot with Papal Rome, we need only add the declaration of the Angel, that the seven heads of the Beast on which she rides, are “seven mountains, on which the Woman sitteth ;” and that she is “that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

This identification with Rome is too obvious to call for any remark. Its conclusiveness has been admitted by the most eminent among even Popish commentators themselves, who have vainly attempted to shift the fulfilment from Papal to Pagan Rome. On this subject, we need only remind our readers of the foregoing observation of St. John, at the spectacle of the outpouring of the blood of the saints, which would be inconsistent with the supposition of Pagan Rome being the guilty power ; as also of the unanswerable dilemma put by Bishop Newton, that if Pagan Rome were the Babylon of the Apocalypse, Pagan Rome having been destroyed, she (Rome) is now become “the

hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird," as we are told in the second verse of the next chapter—a description of Rome Papal that will scarcely be adopted by any of her members, or by those who would endeavour to palliate her enormities.

Second.—We shall now direct our attention to the seven-headed and ten-horned Beast on which the Woman sitteth. With respect to this, we cannot be at a loss to recognise the well-established symbol of the Roman dynasty ; and we have only to ascertain how far the description here given of it is consistent with our explanation of the meaning of the symbolic Harlot. It is evident, that if our explanation of the Woman being the Romish apostasy be correct, the description of the Beast here given by the Evangelist, must be likewise consistent with what the Roman dynasty has been since the rise of the Papacy, and still continues to be. St. John is told by the Angel, "the Beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." This is obviously a description of the Beast, as it exists *at the time the Woman is sitting on him* ; and bearing in mind, that the Roman dynasty is to be in existence at the close of this dispensation, and that its existence, as a secular power, has been suspended since the rise of the Papacy, the description here given of it is interestingly accurate. The Roman empire did exist—it does not now exist—for, during the continuance of the Papacy, the spiritual has extinguished the temporal power, as we have already shewn—and it will hereafter revive in an infidel

form, and be finally exterminated. It is, therefore, aptly described by the Angel, speaking of it during the dominion of Popery—"it was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." It is, moreover, consistently represented without the crowns on its heads, which it had during the Emperorship, and as it appeared in the twelfth chapter—and also without the crowns on its horns, which it will have under the Antichrist, as represented in the thirteenth chapter.

The Angel then continues:—"And this is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the Woman sitteth. (And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; but when he cometh he shall continue a short space. And the Beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is [out] of the seven, and goeth into perdition.) And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour (simultaneously) with the Beast." We have written this passage as we conceive it ought to be read, including what relates to the seven kings in a parenthesis. And reading it thus, it fully corroborates the view we have taken of the prophetic picture. Rome, *as a temporal power*, is in a non-existent state during the Papacy, that is to say, while the Woman is connected with it in the manner she is, and has been. Such being the case, the connexion between the Papacy and Rome is a mere *territorial connexion*. It would, therefore, be an inconsistency in the prophetic announcement, to say, in this place,

that the seven heads of the Beast, *while the Papacy was overriding it*, were symbolic of the seven heads of the temporal dynasty of Rome—viz., Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, Tribunes, Emperors, and Antichrist, the temporal government being then, as we have observed, in abeyance. Consequently, the Angel declares to the Evangelist, that these seven heads of the Beast, during the existence of the Papacy, symbolize, not the seven heads of the Roman dynasty, *but the seven hills of Rome*, which alone constitute the connexion of the Papacy with Rome, as we have already observed. At the same time, the Angel adds, parenthetically, that there are seven kings, or forms of Roman government; and which we have seen are symbolized by the seven heads of the Beast, when his temporal power was existent under the Emperors, and when his temporal power shall revive in the days of the Antichrist—thus preserving that meaning to the symbol of the seven heads, which would otherwise have been excluded by confining it to the seven hills of Rome. This shows the consistency of our view of the prophecy with the prophetic imagery, on the one hand; and the extreme accuracy and consistency of the prophetic imagery with historic and existent facts, on the other.

The Angel's description of the seven heads we shall discuss and explain more fully hereafter; and as regards the ten horns, we have only to observe, that they are here represented, consistently with our previous anticipations, as ten kings reigning contemporaneously (*μικαν ωραν*) with the eighth head of the Beast, constituting him "King of kings," giving

their united power and strength unto the Beast, and making war with the Lamb, who shall overcome them, "for he is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings;" and in their fall, the feet of Daniel's image shall be struck by the Stone, and broken to pieces.

Lastly.—The destruction of the Whore, or the Romish apostasy, is thus revealed:—"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; FOR HE IS LORD OF LORDS AND KING OF KINGS; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. . . . And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the Whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the Beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the Woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Thus, the destruction of this apostate system will be completed by the ten kings, who shall reign contemporaneously with, and give their power to, the Beast; and the extermination of it will be for the purpose of giving their kingdom unto the Beast. That Beast, as we have before explained, is to be the open manifestation of infidel power, which is obviously inconsistent with a mere "mystery of ini-

quity," such as the Papacy is ; and, therefore, the first proceeding of this Antichristian confederation, will be to put an end to the very name and appearance of Christianity, in the destruction of even an apostate system of it.

And here we may again remark, that the circumstance predicted in this passage, of the Beast surviving the Whore, and the circumstance of the Beast and False Prophet being taken together, and together cast into the lake of fire, as depicted in the nineteenth chapter, are demonstrative of the inconsistency of an interpretation which has widely prevailed, of the False Prophet being identical with the Whore, and both of them symbolic of the Papal power. This alone, independent of many other inconsistencies to which such an interpretation would give rise, is sufficient to lead our minds to the conclusion, that a system of infidelity which shall condemn and abolish even Popery itself, as too religious and godly a system, is yet to arise and survive the fall of that apostasy ; and that, therefore, the two Beasts of the thirteenth chapter depict something that shall not come into existence, until the Papacy shall have been swept away.

We have stated, at the commencement of this chapter, that almost all Protestant commentators have concurred in the interpretation of the Romish apostasy being symbolized by the Whore. There have, however, been some dissentients from this opinion ; and among these, we find that Mr. Burgh has raised, as an objection, and, we may say, the only objection to it, that the Woman having been

disclosed by the angel to be "a city," cannot, with propriety, be interpreted to be "a system." To this we reply, in the first place, that such an identification of a Church with a City, is to be found in this same book of "the Revelation," chap. xxi. v. 2 ; and moreover, the Church of Rome is so identified, in point of fact, with the city of Rome, even at the present day, that a prediction of the destruction of the city of Rome, the heart from which flows all the vitality of the system, would be tantamount to a prophecy of the extermination of Popery itself, as a system. And when Rome shall, as Mr. Burgh admits it will, rise again into the wealth, magnificence, and power described in the next chapter, Popery will, in all probability, as being the moving cause of its worldly pre-eminence, be the breath of life to it ; and will have so centralised and localised its powers, that with the fall of Rome itself, the whole fabric of the Romish apostasy will be extinguished.

Let us picture to ourselves the occurrence of such an event, even in the present day, as the utter destruction and desolation of Rome, so as never more to be inhabited by anything but the beasts of the forest, and will it be deemed too rash an expectation to be indulged in, that the whole framework of the Papacy would receive such a shock, as to insure the speedy dissolution of the system, though to be succeeded, perhaps, by something even more abominable. Add to this, that the name of "Mystery" is branded on her forehead, as also the title of being "the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth"—that is to say, of fornications or idolatries, which are only appli-

cable to some system of religion—and we may conclude, that the objection raised by Mr. Burgh is not of such weight, as that it ought to have prevented him from concurring in his interpretations, with those who have identified the Great Whore with the Romish apostasy.

There is nothing exaggerated in the language of the Prophet, as applied to Popery. The Kings of the earth have, even already, committed spiritual fornication with her ; and the inhabitants of the earth have been intoxicated with her pernicious dogmas—her raiment is, almost literally, purple and scarlet—it is her boast and pride to be decked with costliness and splendour—while her dominion, or spiritual influence, even now, extends over, and is acknowledged by, peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. The other parts of this imagery—viz., the Beast on which she is seated, and the explanation given of it, harmonise with all that we hear and see of Popery ; and, therefore, even though something farther is to be evolved from the womb of time, more consistent with the imagery before us, yet still we are justified in the conclusion, that Popery is the system from which it shall be expanded ; and that the continuance and destruction of the one, will be coincident with the continuance and destruction of the other.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FALL OF BABYLON.

“And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof.”—
1 JOHN, ii. 17.

WE have, in the preceding chapter of “the Revelation,” traced the destruction of Apostasy, or the deceit of the Devil; and in that which we are about to consider, we shall find a revelation of the extinction of the deceits of the World. Rome, in her revived state of commercial prosperity, refinement, and luxury, will present a combination of apostasy and wordliness never surpassed on earth, even by her type Babylon; and in the destruction of her apostate system, and of her wealth, pomp, and grandeur, we are presented with prophetic pictures of the extermination of all Apostasy, and of all Wordliness, by the Lord, when he shall enter into judgment with them. This we conceive to be the object of the prophecies of the immediately preceding chapter, and of that which is now about to come under our consideration.

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation

of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day—death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! for in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every

shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city ! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness ! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets ; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee ; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee ; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee : for thy merchants were the great men of the earth ; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”—Rev. xviii. 1-24.

The language of this lament is almost identical with the language in which the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, have predicted the downfall of Babylon and Tyre, the two powers most prominent in their days for commercial prosperity, pride, and hostility to the people of God ; and here it is used to describe the destruction of a city which will, as appears from the contents of this and the preceding chapter, be remarkable for the same characteristics. So far the language of the prophecy confirms the view we have taken of its meaning. But we have said, that it was intended to convey to us a picture of the destruction of the second enemy of God’s

Church, viz., the things of the World. Let us, therefore, examine its contents, to ascertain how far this position can be established.

The opening words, "After these things I saw," show that it is a distinct prophecy from that which preceded it, though they obviously relate to the same subject matter—viz., the destruction of Babylon. There must be, therefore, some difference in the purport and intent of the two prophecies, or why should they be divided as they are? And what can be more satisfactory than our conclusion respecting them—viz., that the former depicts the destruction of the spiritual apostasy, and the latter, the material worldliness of the city; or, in other words, the system of the Papacy, and the city of the Papacy.

But while it manifestly pourtrays the things of the World which are contained in this city, we have stated that it also conveys a revelation of the destruction of the things of the World in general; and this may likewise be collected from the language of the prophecy, where we are told, that "*the merchants of the earth* waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies;" and it is added, "*the merchants of the earth* shall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth her merchandise any more." It then goes on to enumerate the various descriptions, or items of that merchandise, which we shall find to be employed in what St. John, in his Epistle, sums up as "all that is in the world, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life." For instance, the enumeration commences with "the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and pearls,

and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble." All these are, properly speaking, to be classed under the "*lust of the eye*," inasmuch as they are valued by their pleasing effect on the vision, which is enhanced in proportion to their variety. The prophecy then goes on to enumerate further, "and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep"(cattle)—these are obviously to be classed under "*the lust of the flesh*," all of them administering to carnal enjoyments, and the luxuries of appetite. And the remainder—viz., "horses, and chariots, and slaves, and the souls (bodies) of men," may, with propriety, be classified under "*the pride of life*," all of them being the emblems of that superiority and dominion, which it is the great object of human pride to attain to. An inspection of the Greek version of this passage, will show the reader, that the division which we have suggested, of the several items composing this catalogue of merchandise, is countenanced by the structure of the passage in the original—the first and third clauses being in the genitive, and the second in the accusative case.

The prophecy then describes the lamentations of the "merchants of these things which were made rich by her," and of "the shipmasters," and "as many as trade by sea"—that is to say, of all connected with the things of the World, whether on the

land or on the sea, the desires of whose hands are declared to have come to nought in one hour.

Thus, in the prophetic wailing for the fall of Babylon the great city, we have the lamentations of "the Kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her"—of the merchants of the earth, who "have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies," deploring the destruction of their trade in the things of the world, "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life"—and, also, of the shipmasters and traders by sea, who were equally interested in the fatal traffic. And in this description of the universal ruin of the worshippers of Mammon, is obviously conveyed a prophetic declaration of the extermination of the second great enemy of God's Church, revealed in the parable of the sower—viz., the things of the World choking the seed that has fallen among the thorns.

Such, then, is, in our view, the purport and intent of these two prophecies—viz., the destruction of Babylon, or the revived apostate and worldly city of Rome; and in it a revelation of the extermination of apostasy and worldliness in general—in like manner as the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah are referred to by St. Peter and St. Jude, as being set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, unto them that after should live ungodly.—2 Pet. ii. 6; Jude, 7.

This destruction of Rome by the ten Kings, who shall share the dominion of the world with the then infidel eighth head of the Roman empire, and that, too, for the purpose of concentrating all power in him,

requires some explanation—as, at first sight, there is an apparent inconsistency in such a proceeding, if Rome is to be the metropolis of the revived Roman empire. Independent, however, of such being the inevitable result of the events, as here predicted, we can very well conceive that such will be the natural course of events, if the principles which we have extracted from these and other prophecies in Scripture, and on which we have been explaining those of this book in particular, are well founded.

The great instrument by which the Devil has been enlarging his kingdom from among the inhabitants of the world, since the rise of Christianity, has been Apostasy, or “the Mystery of Iniquity;” and as time rolls on, it will be found, that this evil will increase in subtilty and extent, and become enlarged in power, by concentration. Popery has always been the most prominent, extensive, and systematic of all apostasies, and, on that account, may well be termed “*the apostasy* ;” and Popery will, no doubt, be the form of apostasy that will swallow up all the others, and stand out, at the last, the chief, if not the sole, manifestation of apostasy properly so called, as distinguished from infidelity.

Those who may hesitate to adopt this conclusion, on the ground of the improbability of the revival of the decaying power of Rome, as well as of the concentration of other apostasies in her system, know but little of the depth and tenacity of her roots. To such we would observe, that the religion of Romanism, when sifted and examined, will be found to be the religion of the natural and unregenerated

heart of man, clothed in the garb, and assuming the titles of Christianity, though it has had existence since the fall of Adam. And if the hearts of mankind were, at this moment, laid bare, and their motives and principles of action exposed to view, many an one of those, who pride and plume themselves on their hatred of Popery, and whose tongues are among the loudest in denunciation of her errors and abominations, would be found acting on the very same motives, and harbouring those identical principles in their hearts, that in the earliest ages of the Christian Church, expanded into a system, which, under the name of Christian, is but a reproduction of heathen superstition and idolatry. The natural heart of man remains the same in the present day, that it was from the earliest hour of the creation—the same feelings actuate, and the same principles guide him, though, from the influence of external circumstances, the forms of their development may be controlled or varied. Those, whose sacred profession, as ministers of the Gospel, has led them to the sifting of the inmost minds of men on the subject of their religious sentiments—and more especially when the approach of death lays bare many a deeply-concealed feeling—can testify how prevalent in the unregenerate heart are the principles on which the whole fabric of Popery is built; and the wide welcome that has, of late years, been given to the advent of Tractarian principles, is sad evidence that the same seed is to be found, even in the (humanly speaking) best educated and best informed of this enlightened and professedly Protestant nation; and that a very little en-

couragement, indeed, would be required, to produce an awfully extensive defection from our own Church to that of Rome.

On the other hand, look at the position in which that apostate system has placed herself with respect to all other religious systems. Uncompromising and unchanging, she has ever refused to surrender or adopt one doctrine or principle of action, in conciliation of those who have evinced and expressed every desire to meet her. She has, in point of fact, entrenched herself behind the wall of infallibility and unchangeableness ; and the consequence has been, that while many have, in the late Tractarian movement, openly cast off their adhesion to Protestantism and embraced Popery, many more are only deterred by worldly interests from following their example. All this has been taking place, as we have seen, among the members of one of the most learned communities in the world, and is but an index of the depth and strength, in the human heart, of the principles on which Romanism has been built.

If, then, the tendency of the natural heart of man is to Popery, in substance and reality, though in many instances, not in name ; and if Popery has so framed her system, as to have precluded herself from yielding up any of her forms and doctrines, the result must be, that sooner or later, the unregenerate hearts of men will be drawn, in their natural tendency to apostasy, into her subtle and pernicious snares. The political prejudices and antipathies which have so long kept so many, whose feelings and principles are, unknown to themselves, essentially

Popish, from open communion with that Church, will not last for ever: and to the inquiring eye, the cloud not larger than a man's hand, has already appeared in the horizon, that will ere long spread over the heavens, and wrap the earth again in that mystery of iniquity.

Open rebellion against the God of heaven will be the last form in which the human race will manifest their unregeneracy; but they will, we doubt not, pass through Romanism in their progress to infidelity—and in the meantime, what will be the condition of Rome, the immutable centre from which, and to which, flows all the vitality of the system? One of her leading objects has ever been to centralise her power; and another, to accumulate around her, wealth, pomp, and magnificence. This is the atmosphere in which she lives, and moves, and has her being; and the great aim and end of her practical doctrines, have ever been to draw around her the dazzling decorations of which the raiment of the Woman is composed—"purple, and scarlet colour, with gold, and precious stones, and pearls." It is clear, therefore, that the result of a general defection to Popery would be, to aggrandise and enrich Rome, the focus of all ecclesiastical power; and, in fact, to identify her in wealth and luxury with the Babylon described in the prophecy before us. Thus, this natural inclination to apostasy, while it tends to realise the picture of the Scarlet Whore, tends also to realise, in Rome herself, the picture here disclosed of Babylon previous to its final desolation.

In considering the transition of the world to apos-

tasy, and from apostasy to open infidelity, it must be borne in mind, that in speaking of infidelity, we do not mean by that term Atheism properly so called, or the negation or rejection of all and every superior and superintending power in the universe. That species of infidelity has never been the occupant of the human mind, since the commencement of the world, even in its most savage, uncivilised, and unregenerate state. Where the true God has not been acknowledged and worshipped, some Baal has been set up in his place. The history of the Bible, and, indeed, all history and experience attests this superstitious inclination of the mind of man to look up to a supreme superintending influence over the affairs of the world; and, in the present dispensation, while God is gathering his own people out of the world, it suits the purpose of Satan to permit his subjects to call themselves by the name of Christ, and yet to be, at the same time, practically and effectually serving himself. And, therefore, as long as he suffers them to remain in this state of nominal allegiance to God, apostasy must always be his adopted and principal agent in working out his own ends. As soon, however, as the fulness of the time shall have arrived, when the name of Christ is to be rejected, and the Devil is to take unto himself his power, and to be openly acknowledged as the Prince of this world, apostasy is to be cast aside, before the rising standard of open and avowed infidelity and rebellion; and its adherents will be called on to crush and extinguish the then useless and obstructive agent, and to give their kingdom to the Beast from the bottomless pit,

on whom Satan shall have bestowed "his seat, and power, and great authority." And so it is here revealed, "the ten Kings shall hate the Whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

Such will be the end of Rome—hurled into the abyss, with the millstone of Popery round her neck, never to rise again ; being carried down to her destruction by that which shall have raised her to the pinnacle of worldly pre-eminence and grandeur. More than once in the history of the world, has she been made desolate and naked by her enemies ; but again and again, has she been revived and restored, and again and again, has she made use of her returning strength, to persecute religion, and slay the saints of God ; but at this time, God shall at length enter into final judgment with her, as the Angel announces, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you of her."

This vitality and endurance of the Papacy, amid the vicissitudes and revolutions of the nations of the world, has been correctly and vividly portrayed by Mr. Macaulay, in one of his "Critical and Historical Essays :"—

"There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination, as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilisation. No other institution is left standing, which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when came—

* "Ranke's History of the Popes," by Thomas Babington Macaulay.

leopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The grandest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the supreme pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series, from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice comes next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustin, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the New World have more than compensated for what she has lost in the Old. Her spiritual ascendancy extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn—countries which, a century hence, may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The members of her communion are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions; and it will be difficult to show that all other Christian sects united amount to a hundred and twenty millions. Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot in Britain, before the French had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca; and she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

Thus, from the past history and present position of the Papacy, we have every reason to expect that

her final doom is not to be consummated by the progress of the Christian religion, and the enlightenment and conversion of mankind. On the contrary, all her antecedents, independent of the voice of prophecy, warrant the conclusion, that she is destined to outlive the present political and religious systems of the world, and to continue to exist until her triumphant and intolerant zeal shall have trampled out the last spark of Gospel truth among the human race.

But it may be asked, as we have already suggested, how is this utter destruction of Rome compatible with the continued, and even expanded, existence of "the fourth kingdom," or Roman empire, as here revealed? Even if this were a difficulty, the words of the Revelation are too plain and unequivocal to be rejected. But it will appear from our former observations, that there is no difficulty to be encountered. The Beast, as represented in the thirteenth chapter, is, as we have already seen, "the fourth kingdom" in its infidel state—that is to say, when it shall be under the acknowledged dominion of Satan, or his agents, recognising him as the sole God of the World. This can only be effected by the removal of the last semblance of allegiance to the true God, the Apostasy, with which must fall its seat and centre, Rome. And then shall commence the days of the Antichrist, who denieth the Father and the Son—the seat of whose government will be no longer Rome, but Jerusalem, the predicted seat of the Messiah; when, as we are told in the Prophecies of Daniel, "he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas, in the glo-

rious holy mountain ;” and where, it is added, “ he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” This is, in all probability, the meaning of the treading of the winepress “ without the city,” as described in Rev. xiv. 20.

This removal of the seat of the Antichristian power to Jerusalem is confirmed by the revelation, in the eleventh chapter of this book, of the slaughter of the two witnesses by the Beast, and of the exposure of their dead bodies in the streets of the city “ *where also our Lord was crucified.*” Moreover, Jerusalem is geographically the centre of the habitable world, and the declared throne of Christ, who will be imitated in every external particular, as nearly as may be, by the Antichrist ; and nothing can be clearer in the pages of Holy Writ, as we have fully proved in “ The Latter Days,” than that the last remnant of faith (not in Christ crucified, but in God the Father and his expected Messiah) shall be found among the Jews, who shall oppose a stubborn front, as in the days of Antiochus, to the pretensions of the Antichrist, and shall fall, a glorious company of martyrs, beneath his and the False Prophet’s merciless persecutions—“ How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?”

The destruction, therefore, of Rome, the city of the Apostasy, will be but the first act of the great Antichristian ^{drama} *deceiver*, when iniquity shall have come to its fulness, and when, as the next chapter reveals, the time is approaching that Christ shall come into collision with Antichrist on the field of

Armageddon, and exterminate his host from the face of the earth. We are now in a position to explain more fully the circumstance of the deadly wound inflicted on the Beast, which is mentioned in the thirteenth chapter as one of his characteristics, and also the circumstance of the eighth head out of the seven.

In the portrait of the Whore sitting on the Beast, which is presented to our view in the seventeenth chapter, we perceive that there is an intimate connexion between the Papacy and the Beast ; and while that connexion subsists, the Beast is pourtrayed as being in a state of suspended existence (it “was, and is not, and yet shall be”), and stripped of temporal power, having no crowns either on its heads or its horns. This is easy to be recognised as the state of the Roman dynasty, “the fourth kingdom on earth,” at the present time, and throughout the continuance of the Papacy, with whom the kings of Christendom have been, and are now, committing spiritual fornication. But when the time of the end is approaching, the head of the Papacy will, no doubt, proceed to assume and assert temporal authority, and seek to extend, and again to aggrandise, the Roman Empire, so as to obtain supremacy over the nations of the world. At this time, it is probable that the head of the Papal power, a Pope, shall become the seventh head of the Beast, thereby reviving and restoring the *temporal* sovereignty of Rome, which is now, and has been since the rise of the Popedom, in abeyance or suspension. This shall be the Antichrist ; but still, as being the head of the Papacy, not the open and avowed Antichrist, who

shall, without disguise, deny the Father and the Son. But prophecy further discloses, that the Papacy (the Whore) is to be made desolate, and to be burned by the ten Kings, and her seat of dominion, Rome, to be destroyed; and in that devastation, the head of the Papacy, the seventh head of the Beast, the incipient Antichrist, must receive his deadly wound, and expire. Then shall come the miraculous revival, by which he shall be restored to life, and stand forth the avowed antagonist of God and his Christ, and the usurper of his kingdom and power. In this form it is, that he is styled "the eighth head, and of the seven," or *out* of the seven (*εκ των επτα*), a continuance of the seventh head—the same person, the same power—only that, instead of being covertly the Antichrist, or "mystery of iniquity," the Vicar of Christ on earth, he has become openly and without disguise the usurper of the powers and attributes of God and his Messiah—the Antichrist—the Man of Sin—"the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God;" and who shall be received and recognised as their supreme, by the ten Kings, "the Kings of the earth, and of the whole world," who are "to agree, and give their kingdom unto the Beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

It is at this stage of existence, that the Beast is introduced to our view in the thirteenth chapter, with the crowns upon his ten horns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy, "KING OF KINGS AND

LORD OF LORDS ;” and when, it is stated, the Evangelist saw “one of his heads, as it were, wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed ; and all the world wondered after the Beast.” The prophecy then discloses, that they worshipped, not only the Beast, but the Dragon, or the Devil, that gave him his power, and by whose agency his miraculous restoration to life shall have taken place—leading to the conclusion, that, in consistency with our explanation, this death and miraculous revival of the Antichrist—this healing of his deadly wound, will be the source of the power which he shall acquire over “all kindreds, and tongues, and nations,” and the origin of the worship which is to be accorded to him by “all the world.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE OVERTHROW OF THE BEAST AND THE FALSE
PROPHET.

“For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for THE KING it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.”—ISAIAH, xxx. 33.

IN the symbolic imagery of the two immediately preceding chapters, we have traced revelations of the extermination of the Apostasy, symbolized by the Scarlet Whore, and of the World, symbolized by Babylon, the seat of the Apostasy, and which are the enemies of the Church of Christ in the present day. These being disposed of, the revelation of the downfall and destruction of the remaining consummation of evil, viz., the open and avowed manifestation of civil and ecclesiastical apostasy, typified by St. Jude, in the gain-saying or rebellion of Korah and his rebel companions (Jude, 11), remains to be presented to our view. This we shall find to be the subject of this next chapter of the Apocalypse, which appears to be a distinct and separate prophecy in itself; commencing, like that which precedes it, with the distinctive announce-

ment—"And after these things I heard," &c. The following are the words of the prophecy:—

"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great Whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four-and-twenty elders and the four Beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his ves-

ture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the Beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the Beast was taken, and with him the False Prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."—Rev. xix.

This prophecy is properly divisible into three parts—the first is the song of triumph in heaven for the previously revealed judgments on the Great Whore of Babylon—the second is the announcement of the marriage of the Lamb—and the third is the final encounter with, and conquest of, the Beast and the False Prophet. These we shall consider separately.

First.—The song of triumph for the destruction of Babylon the great requires no explanation as to its meaning, the language being as simple and intelligible as it is beautiful and sublime. The only observation, therefore, which it will be necessary to make respecting it is, that it fixes the time of the fulfilment of the prophecy to be posterior to the destruction of the Great Whore and Babylon or Rome, and proves the entire distinctness of the Romish

apostasy from the Beast and the False Prophet, whose destruction is here predicted. The two latter are, in fact, forms of evil openly manifested and avowed, without mystery or disguise, whose power shall be built upon the ruins of the Papacy, and shall survive its fall.

Secondly.—The announcement of the marriage of the Lamb, is the announcement of the visible union of Christ with his Church, at this time perfected and made ready to be presented to himself, “a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.” The present dispensation is one of gathering in to the marriage, as described in the parable (Matt. xxii.) ; and the close of it will be, when all the elect shall have been gathered unto the marriage supper. Therefore, at the time of the fulfilment of this prophecy, the Church of Christ shall have been perfected ; all of its members having been brought into it ; and the advent of Christ with his saints is at hand, as revealed in the next section of the prophecy.

Third.—The overthrow of the Beast and the False Prophet, with their attendant hosts of the Kings of the earth, is introduced in a vision of Christ coming in glory, with the myriads of his saints, to judgment, to put down all his enemies, and take the kingdom unto himself and reign—“As Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of them, saying, The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all.”—Jude, 14. This advent of Christ to earth for the destruction of his enemies, has been predicted by all the Prophets of the Old Testament, some of whom have also fixed the locality

of it in the Holy Land. It is here pourtrayed as “the treading of the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God;” and the same image is presented to us in the Prophecies of Isaiah—“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? *I have trodden the winepress alone*; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments; and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, *and the year of my redeemed is come.*”—Is. lxiii. 1–4. It is also described as “the supper of the great God;” and in Isaiah we find the same image of judgment—“*And in this mountain* shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees.”—Is. xxv. 6. These prophecies fix the locality of this encounter in the Holy Land; and the treading of the winepress in the Book of “the Revelation” is likewise, as appears from Rev. xiv. 20, to take place on the same spot. There can, therefore, be no doubt but that all these prophecies refer to one and the same event; and are connected with the final deliverance and redemption of the Jewish people in their own land, when suffering under persecutions, and their last “great tribulation,” at the hands of the Antichrist and his False Prophet.

This is further established by the invitation of the

Angel standing in the sun “to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the Great God ; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.” Compare this with the obviously parallel prophecy in Ezekiel, which fully and accurately describes the object and effect of the proceeding to be the destruction of the enemies of his people Israel, and their full and final reconciliation with their God in their own land—

“And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God, speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, assemble yourselves and come ; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice *upon the mountains of Israel*, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, and lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and all men of war, saith the Lord God. And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity ; be-

cause they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies ; so fell they all by the sword. According to their uncleanness, and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, now *I will bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel*, and will be jealous for my holy name ; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations ; then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen : but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. *Neither will I hide my face any more from them : for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.*"—Ezekiel, xxxix. 17–29.

Thus, it is manifest, that this final encounter between the powers of light and darkness—between Christ and Antichrist—is to take place in the land of Judea. The Antichristian host, composed of the Beast, his False Prophet, and the Kings of the earth, with their armies, leads us back to the portents of the sixth vial, where we find the opposing forces thus described—"And the sixth angel poured out his vial on the great river Euphrates ; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of *the Kings of*

the East might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. For they are the Spirits of Devils working miracles, which go forth *unto the Kings of the Earth* and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the *great day of God Almighty*. Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together unto a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." Thus, the two earthly armies which shall be opposed to each other on the plains of Armageddon, will be the Kings of the East, or the returning Ten Tribes, on the one side, and the Beast and the Kings of the Earth with their armies, on the other side; as described in the nineteenth verse of the chapter of "the Revelation" which we are considering. "And I saw the Beast and the Kings of the Earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." And it is at this crisis, that Christ and his saints shall suddenly come in power, as foreshadowed in the announcement, "Behold, I come as a thief," &c.; and openly revealed in the imagery before us, as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS;" advancing "with the armies which were in heaven," "to smite the nations," and to "rule them with a rod of iron," and to tread the "winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

The issue of this conflict is, that the Beast and False Prophet are taken, and cast alive into a lake of

fire burning with brimstone, perishing utterly, like Korah and his rebel company, in their avowed iniquity; while the remnant are represented as slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, and the fowls were filled with their flesh.

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years; and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he shall be loosed a little season.”—Rev. xx. 1–3.

The only member of this Antichristian confederation that remains is the Dragon—the Devil himself, the origin and promoter of all this wickedness thus cut off and exterminated. He was not one of those who appeared in open rebellion on the field of Armageddon; and therefore it is that he does not here meet with his final end. However, on Christ's advent to earth, as on the occasion of his ascension to heaven, as described in the twelfth chapter of the book of “the Revelation,” the Devil is to be cast out of the place of his bodily presence; and, accordingly, an angel is sent to shut him up in the bottomless pit, that he should deceive the nations no more until the expiration of a thousand years—the duration of the millennial reign—the nature of which, as revealed in Scripture, we shall, in our next chapter, endeavour to ascertain. We shall conclude this section of our inquiries with a few observations, to show how neces-

sarily the scheme of interpretation, which we have been following out, flows from the doctrines and principles which are avowedly held by Mr. Birks, Mr. Bickersteth, Mr. Elliott, and other eminent divines of the present day—we mean, those of the Jewish restoration, the personal reign of Christ, and the individuality of an Antichrist yet to arise.

Mr. Birks states, in his explanation of the closing verses of the description of the Wilful King in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, that—

“It may be inferred from a careful comparison of several Scriptures, that at this time (the Jewish restoration), the temple described in Ezekiel will have been built, and that *there this fierce and mighty king will seat himself as a sovereign, and claim to be the object of a divine adoration.*”^{*} And again—“The Papacy, directed by the Wilful King, in its last hours will fill up the measure of its apostasy, and gather to itself those partial features of Antichrist which are now to be seen in the Mahometan delusion, and its open rejection of the Son of God. At the same time a leader will arise, *the last personal head of the compound system of evil*, and the heathen Antiochus, the Pope, and the Turk, contribute to supply the features of this iniquity. The Wilful King, in this last stage of his power, and represented now by this leader, will gather in himself the predicted character of a King of the North, and then come down like a whirlwind on the land of Israel. Success for a time will attend his banners, so that, in the words of Habakkuk, ‘he will gather to himself all nations, and heap unto himself all people.’ *The faithful witnesses, who protest against his idolatry and blasphemy, will be persecuted with great wrath, and hunted out for destruction.* The king of pride will take *Jerusalem, the holy city*, for the seat, where he will plant his standard, and probably claim divine honours from the subject nations; a

* “The Two Later Visions of Daniel,” p. 337.

worship to be paid, in his person, to the dignity of regenerate and glorified humanity, freed from the long delusion of past ages.”*

The Being described in the foregoing passages, is manifestly the same as that which is predicted by St. Paul, as the Man of Sin, “the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; *so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*” —2 Thess. ii. 4. And it is equally manifest, that the same Being is identical with the first Beast of the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation; for, independently of the similarity, we might say the identity, of the distinguishing characteristics of each of them, viz., rejection of God, and the setting himself up as an object of divine adoration, *the end of each is the same*, in point of time and manner, by the hand of the Lord at his second advent. Indeed, Mr. Birks admits the identity of the Man of Sin with the first or second Beast of the thirteenth chapter of “the Revelation;” for he states, “that the Wilful King and the first or second Beast of Rev. xiii., are in truth different expressions for one single power;”† and, in the next page, that St. Paul’s description of the Man of Sin identifies him with the Wilful King.‡ Therefore, as Mr. Birks admits, that an individual, “a fierce and mighty king,” *is to seat himself in the restored temple at Jerusalem, and claim divine adoration*, we are warranted in our conclusion, that this circum-

* “The Two Later Visions of Daniel,” p. 338.

† Ibid. p. 267.

‡ Ibid. p. 268.

stance will, when it shall take place, be the obvious fulfilment of St. Paul's prediction of "the Man of Sin," who shall sit "in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." And, as "the Man of Sin" is, according to him, as we have shewn above, the same power as that symbolized by the Beast of Rev. xiii., it follows, that this Beast of "the Revelation" will be an individual, "a fierce and mighty king," who is yet to arise, take his seat in the temple at Jerusalem, and cause "all that dwell upon the earth to worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." That he is to be an individual, appears also from the description of his destruction—being "*taken, and cast alive* into the lake of brimstone."

But this Beast is to slay the two witnesses, as portrayed in the eleventh chapter of the Revelations; and Mr. Birks, we may observe, intimates, in his foregoing description of the proceedings of this Being, that such will be the case. That event is, therefore, still future; and if so, the second woe, which is not to expire until after the resurrection of these two witnesses, has not yet passed away. Consequently, the portents of the sixth trumpet cannot symbolize the Turkish inroads on Christendom, which, according to all preterist expositors, have long since come to an end.* This will be found to displace the chronology of the fifth trumpet portents, commonly

* According to Mr. Elliott, the Turkish woe came to an end in the year 1688.

denominated, in the preterist system, the Saracenic woe, and of all the preceding trumpets and seals ; and proves, at all events, that if the imagery of the seals and trumpets is a fulfilled prophecy, the fulfilment is yet to be discovered.

It is true, that though Mr. Birks interprets this prediction of the Wilful King to be one that is yet to be fulfilled, in the manner he has stated above, yet he also interprets it to have had a past fulfilment in the wars of the Saracens and Turks—in fact, that the prophecy has a double fulfilment—one precursive, and the other full and complete. Admitting this—though there are strong grounds for questioning the position—it may be contended, in like manner, that the symbolic predictions of the two Beasts may have a double fulfilment—one in the Papacy, which is partly past and partly in progress ; and the other, in the proceedings of the individual Antichrist, who is to fall before Christ at his second coming. That such may be the case to some extent, we are far from denying. It may be that God, in his wisdom, has framed this divine revelation, so as, in some portions of it, to be capable of a double fulfilment. But, however that may be, all that we now contend for is, that there is to be a fulfilment of the symbolic predictions of the Apocalyptic Beasts, in the future proceedings and final doom of an individual Antichrist who is yet to arise ; and this, we submit, has been established.

Now, as regards the system of Mr. Elliott, who appears to have been adopted as the exponent of the views of those of the Millenarians who still adhere

to the preterist expositions of the Apocalypse—Mr. E. admits that the Wilful King, whom he styles “the Papal chief,” will be an individual ; and he also, in consistency with his views of the premillennial advent, construes the conflict on the field of Armageddon to be *a literal conflict*, which shall take place between Christ and his adversaries, in which the Beast and False Prophet are to be taken, and cast *alive* into the burning lake, and the remnant are to be *actually slain* with the sword on the mountains of Israel. Thus Mr. Elliott admits the individuality of the Beast in the nineteenth chapter, which involves, as we before observed, the individuality of the same Beast in the eleventh and thirteenth chapters of this book, and the futurity of the predictions of the seals and trumpets. The same consequence follows from the predicted slaughter of the remnant. For, if the slaughter of the remnant is to be a literal slaughter, on what principle can we exempt the slaughter of the witnesses in the eleventh chapter from being a literal slaughter also ? If the adherents of the Beast, in the nineteenth chapter, are to be actually slain, as predicted, surely the overcoming and killing of the witnesses by the Beast in the eleventh chapter, as there predicted, cannot, with any consistency, be taken to be a figurative slaughter of them—as a mere Papal proclamation of their testimony having been silenced would be. This also disproves the preterist scheme of interpretation, inasmuch as it is not pretended that any such literal slaughter has ever taken place.

It will not be an answer to these observations, to contend that the Beast of the thirteenth chapter

symbolizes the Popedom, or the whole succession of Popes, and that the Beast of the nineteenth chapter symbolizes the last one of that succession. We apprehend, that when a symbol is used in Scripture or elsewhere, to represent or indicate any matter or thing, all that is predicated of that symbol is predicated of, and must be applicable to, all the constituent parts of the same. So that if a symbol is used to represent a collective body of successors to an office, whatever is predicated of that symbol must be predicated of that body collectively, and be applicable to it collectively. Therefore, to predicate of the Beast, that he is to be taken, and cast *alive* into the burning lake, must, if the Beast designates the succession of Popes, be applicable to the whole succession of Popes, which is an obvious absurdity.

According to Mr. Elliott, Leo X. and the Lateran Council overcame and killed the two witnesses ; and the last of the Popes is to be taken, and cast alive into the burning lake—could it be predicated of the last of the Popes that he slew the witnesses, or could it be predicated of Leo X. that he is to be taken, and cast alive into the burning lake ? To illustrate this position—suppose the dynasty of the Sovereigns of England to be symbolized by a Lion. One of the Sovereigns caused the burning of the reformers, Ridley and Latimer ; and another of them was beheaded by his own subjects ;—could it, with propriety, be predicated of the Lion, that he caused the martyrdom of these two reformers, and that he was beheaded by his own subjects ? Whatever, therefore, may be advanced by Anti-millenarians, in support of the pre-

terist system of interpretation, we conceive it to be impossible for a Millenarian to maintain that the Beast of the thirteenth chapter can primarily designate the Papacy as a system, or the Popes as a collective body. Consistently with their principles, it must symbolize an individual, which, as we have already shewn, is fatal to the preterist scheme of interpretation of the Apocalypse. This nineteenth chapter of "the Revelation" is the test of the principles of the expositor—whether he is a Millenarian or the reverse; and it is remarkable that Mr. Elliott's observations on it do not occupy more than half-a-dozen pages of his very voluminous work. Could the previous positions of his interpretations have been strengthened by his explanation of this all-important chapter of "the Revelation," his observations on it would not, we feel assured, have been comparatively so limited in extent.

The time is approaching when the truth of the interpretations of the preterist commentators will be tested by events. According to their system and calculations, the final consummation and completion of this dispensation are to occur within the period of the next thirty years, at the farthest. The *ne plus ultra* of our present mundane chronology, according to Mr. Elliott, will be from 1877 to 1882.* Other commentators bring the completion still nearer, and within the period of the next twelve years. And within this period, ranging from twelve to thirty years, according to the sure Word of God, as ad-

* Hor. Apoc. p. 1431.

mitted by these commentators, *if their system of exposition is correct*, Rome is to be raised to the state of worldly prosperity and importance that is described in Rev. xviii., and then to be destroyed by the instrumentality of the ten confederated Kings ; while the Jews are to be taken out of every country on the face of the globe—to be restored to, and established in a covenant character in, their own land ; and their temple to be rebuilt, according to the gorgeous and extensive pattern laid down in the latter portion of the Prophecies of Ezekiel. All this, we admit, may, and must, be accomplished within the allotted time, if such be the will of God ; but when there is a question whether such be the will of God, few will be found to bring their minds to the belief of the probability that events of so momentous, extraordinary, and extensive a character, will be condensed into so limited a period. And hence it may be in the counsels of God, that the futurist expositions of this book, which have recently become so prevalent, are to take the place of those which may, and we think, must, in all human probability, become falsified by the lapse of a very few years. The times and seasons of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, and of all that is to accompany that leading event, are not, we conceive, to be discovered by human calculations of days and years. God has, we are told, put them “in his own power” (Acts, i. 6, 7), and not in the power of man. But the chronology of the Christian is to be deduced from the comparison of the events which he finds predicted in Scripture, with those that have passed

and are passing in the world around him. The conflict of the principles of Satan with the principles, promises, and doctrines, which the goodness of God has bestowed on mankind for their guidance, in the pages of Holy Writ, affords to the observing and believing mind, ample evidence of those things that are coming upon the earth, and of the nearness of their approach; and, as time progresses, and the evil principle waxes stronger, and becomes more triumphant, as it will, the true believer's chronology will become more defined, and the guiding stars of Revelation shine forth more distinctly to his inquiring eye, in proportion to the intensity of the darkness that is falling around him.

CHAPTER X.

THE MILLENNIAL DISPENSATION.

“And Saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord’s.”—OBAD. 21.

THE Beast and the False Prophet having been taken, and cast into the lake of fire, and their adherents slain by the sword of Christ at his second advent, and Satan himself having been bound and cast into the bottomless pit, that he should deceive the nations no more until the expiration of one thousand years, the present dispensation, or “the Times of the Gentiles,” is closed. Here, therefore, in accordance with the title of this volume, our inquiries ought to conclude—the remainder of the Apocalypse being a revelation of another dispensation, which is to intervene before the final judgment and consummation of all things. We shall, however, briefly consider those remaining prophecies—not with the view of entering into and explaining so extensive and momentous a subject as fully as its importance demands; but to trace their consistency with the exposition which we

have given of those prophecies that we have been examining.

After the revelation of the binding of Satan, and of the casting of him into the bottomless pit, there to remain for the space of one thousand years, during which time he is not to be permitted, as hitherto, to deceive the inhabitants of the world, the Prophet continues :—

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them : and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”—Rev. xx. 4-6.

This passage is a succinct prophetic description of the millennial dispensation. Taken in what may be termed its obvious and literal meaning, it presents no difficulties to those who are content to read the Scriptures with submissive and unprejudiced minds, and are willing to adopt the revelations of the Holy Spirit in their simplicity. The subject is so intimately connected with the restoration of the Jews, that it is vain to expect that those on whom that truth, and the importance of it, have not dawned from the pages of Scripture, should have recognised and adopted the true and simple doctrine of the mil-

lennial dispensation ; while, on the other hand, it cannot long remain concealed from those who look forward to the re-establishment of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, in the Land of Promise.

And what was the promise to Abraham regarding the settlement of himself and his posterity in the land of Canaan? “And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward : For all the land which thou seest, *to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.* And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give it UNTO THEE.”—Gen. xiii. 14–17. And again, God says—“And I will give *unto thee*, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger (the land of thy sojournings), all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession.”—Gen. xvii. 8. The same promise was afterwards repeated to Isaac and to Jacob ; and it is an absolute and unconditional promise, which could not be annulled or avoided by any subsequent promise, act, or event ; and, therefore, the conditional promises afterwards made to the Israelites could not alter or modify it.

Now, such being the promise, has it been fulfilled? That it has not is clear from many passages of Scripture. The testimony of Abraham himself is conclusive on the subject, when he addressed the children of Heth after the death of Sarah—“*I am a stranger*

and a sojourner with you ; give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.”—Gen. xxiii. 4. David, likewise, when king over Israel, made a similar confession (Psalm, xxxix. 12) ; and St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, repeats it (Heb. xi. 13). Again, we find God, long after the deaths of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, repeating his promise to Moses, and in language which shows that it had not been fulfilled in their days, and yet was to be fulfilled to them *personally*—“ And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob . . . And I have also established my covenant with *them*, to give *them* the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were *strangers*.”—Exod. vi. 3, 4. Thus, the promises that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob should personally inherit the land of Canaan, and that their posterity should likewise inherit, not merely occupy as sojourners and pilgrims, the same land, remains to be accomplished, and will, as sure as God is truth, be accomplished to the letter. “ He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac. And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, *unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.*”—Ps. cv. 8–11. ; Mic. vii. 20.

There is another class of promises of the throne of this kingdom of Israel, the throne which David filled, to Christ the Saviour, which are yet to be accomplished.—“ He (Jesus Christ) shall be great, and

shall be called the Son of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his father David : and he shall reign over the house of Jacob* for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”—Luke, i. 32. “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, *and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*”—Jer. xxiii. 5 ; Acts, ii. 30–32. There are many passages of the prophetic Scripture to the same effect ; and the Prophet Ezekiel, under the name of David (the beloved one), expressly connects this enthronement and government of Christ on earth, with the temporal and spiritual restoration of the Jews (Ezekiel, xxxvii. 20–25).

Thus, there are three classes of promises remaining to be fulfilled. First—the restoration of the children of Israel to the land of promise. Second—the personal enjoyment of the inheritance of the same land by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the other saints. Third—The personal reign of Christ over the restored kingdom of Israel.

Now turn to the New Testament, and we there find that when all the tribes of the earth (the land) shall mourn, Christ is to come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory (Matt. xxiv. 30)—that he is to come to the Mount of Olives “in like manner” as he was seen by the Apostles to ascend into heaven (Acts, i. 11)—that he is to be accompanied by his saints (Zech. xiv. 5, Jude, 14), and the dead in Christ shall rise first (1 Thess. iv. 16). From these and many parallel prophecies, we may

conclude, that when Christ shall come again, he shall be accompanied by all his saints, including the patriarchs of Israel, to sit on the throne of his father David, and to restore the kingdom to Israel—to be from thenceforth “an holy nation, a kingdom of priests,” exalted above, and supreme over, all the nations of the world. Satan, the tempter and deceiver of mankind, the Prince of this dispensation, is to be chained up for a season ; and in his absence, the earth will be restored to the state of peace and fecundity which has been lost by the fall of man. Then will be accomplished the predictions, that “the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them,” &c. (Is. xi. 6–9)—and “the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed ; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt” (Amos, ix. 13)—“and they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations” (Is. lxi. 4)—“and they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden ; and the waste, and desolate, and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited” (Exek. xxxvi. 35).

Thus, considered in connexion with the restoration of the Jews, the unfulfilled promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of the inheritance of the land of Canaan, and the unfulfilled promise of the throne of Israel to Christ, the doctrine of the millennial dispensation is simple and intelligible ; and it will be found,

on inquiry and reflection, that the obscurity and doubt which have pervaded the Christian Church on this momentous subject, have arisen from the high-mindedness of those who have been grafted into the olive tree, and who, in despite of St. Paul's warnings and remonstrances, boast themselves against the natural branches. Is it not a truth that, until within a very recent period, the hopes of the Jew, as such, have been, if not literally, at all events practically, denied by Gentile Christians to have any existence? The writings of the fathers of the Church, of the wisest and best among the champions of Christendom, who have fought the good fight against the wiles of Satan, disclose little or nothing of the peculiar hope and expectation of the Jews in their restoration to the land of their forefathers. Some few incidental observations may here and there be found respecting the restoration of Israel; but that restoration is nowhere dwelt upon as a receiving of life from the dead to the Gentile Christian Church. On the contrary, we do not hesitate to affirm, that the prevailing doctrine of Christian divines, more especially since the Reformation, and the doctrine which is even now held by the great majority of those of the present day is, that Christ's kingdom is to be established by grace, and not by judgment—that by their exertions as preachers and teachers, the knowledge of the Lord is to be spread over the earth, as the waters cover the sea; and that Christ will come to a world smiling like the garden of Eden, instead of, as he himself has told us, to a world like the earth in the days of Noah, and like Sodom and Gomorrah in the

days of Lot ; and when, according to his own word, it is questionable if a particle of faith shall be found among the human race (Luke, xviii. 8). Such erroneous views of a subject so important, must have tainted all their inquiries and conclusions respecting the nature and meaning of these prophecies of the millennial dispensation, and have shut out the truth from their eyes.

But to return.—A reference to the historical and prophetical records of the Old Testament dispensation will furnish us with much useful information on this subject. We are there told, that the glory of God dwelt, in the visible form of a cloud, in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and in the temple at Jerusalem. We there also find (in the Prophecies of Ezekiel, c. x. and xi.) an affecting description of the departure of the visible glory of the Lord from the temple, when the sin of Israel had reached its summit—descending to the threshold of the temple, going up from the midst of the city, and lingering on the Mount of Olives ; and then, in the forty-third chapter of the same prophecies, after the accurate delineation, in the three preceding chapters, of the temple that is to be rebuilt in the days of the restoration, we are presented with a prophetic picture of the return of the same glory of the Lord to Israel, and to their restored temple. “And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east ; and his voice was like the noise of many waters ; and the earth shined with his glory. . . . And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is towards the east.”—Ezek.

xliii. 2-4. And in the succeeding verses, the Prophet describes this glory as the actual and personal advent of the Lord. "So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, the *place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet*, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever" (v. 5-7). Compare this with the description of the same event in the Prophecies of Zechariah—"And his feet shall stand on that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east;" and also with the testimony of the angels at the ascension—"This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven"—and we shall have little difficulty in arriving at the conclusion, that as sure as the glory of the Lord dwelt visibly with, and departed and continues absent from, Israel—and as surely as the Saviour pressed with his feet the Mount of Olives, and rose in human form to heaven, so surely shall the glory return in the bodily form of the glorified Saviour, to reign over the kingdom of Israel, and to subdue all nations, and bring them under his dominion. Of the manner in which the Lord shall communicate with, and exhibit himself to, the inhabitants of the world, we are not told, and, therefore, it is not for us to speculate on the subject. It is sufficient to know, that Christ shall reign at Jerusalem with his saints, gloriously; and

that then shall be fulfilled to the letter the promises to the patriarchs and their seed.

There is another Scripture doctrine, the clear understanding of which will be found to be of the utmost importance in elucidating the subject under consideration—we mean the doctrine of the first and second resurrection ; or, in other words, the pre-millennial resurrection of the saints of Christ, to reign with him on earth during the millennial dispensation. There is no truth better established by revelation than that all who die must rise again—that there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. On this there can be no controversy among Christians. At the same time, it is an equally incontrovertible truth, that there will be a resurrection of saints at the second advent of the Saviour—that those who have suffered with him shall reign with him. For instance, in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, we are told—“The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : *and the dead in Christ shall rise first.*”—1 Thess. iv. 16. Again, our Saviour speaks of certain persons being recompensed at “*the resurrection of the just ;*” and of others being “accounted worthy of *that world and the resurrection of the dead.*” And St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Philippians, expresses an anxiety to “attain unto the resurrection of the dead”—not, of course, alluding to a general resurrection, or even to simple salvation at the last, of which he must have been well assured, but to a peculiar and distinctive resurrection, the privilege

and reward of the true and consistent believer in Christ. The same Apostle testified likewise before Agrippa, that the resurrection from the dead was "the promise made of God unto the fathers" (Acts, xxvi. 6, 8), viz., that they should inherit the land; and therefore, the resurrection of the dead to which St. Paul alludes, is the resurrection of the saints to enjoy the promises to the fathers. Thus, it is clear, that there is to be a resurrection of those that are called the just, distinct from, and preceding, the resurrection of the rest of the dead; but, apart from the Book of the Revelation, the period that is to intervene between the two events is not disclosed. This we shall find supplied in the chapter under consideration, and to the explanation of which we shall now return.

Those who fill the thrones which appear to the Evangelist, are the saints who are introduced to our notice in the preceding chapter, as accompanying Christ "upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean," which is explained in a preceding verse (v. 8) as denoting the righteousness of saints. These are they who, in the regeneration, are to sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28)—those who, having suffered with Christ, shall be privileged to reign with him (2 Tim. ii. 12)—to whom the Lord has appointed a kingdom, as his Father hath appointed to himself (St. Luke, xxii. 29)—those to whom, having overcome the enemy, it is granted by the Saviour to sit with him on his throne, even as he himself overcame, and is set down with his Father on his throne (Rev. iii. 21)—and to whom,

moreover, it is granted, that they shall judge the world (1 Cor. vi. 2; Obad. 21). From these references it is obvious, that this revelation of the saints sitting on thrones to judge the world in the regeneration or millennial dispensation, is not for the first and only time introduced to our notice in the passage of Holy Writ before us. It is a simple, and ought to be a familiar, doctrine of Scripture. As Christ has suffered in the flesh on earth, so shall he return in the flesh to reign personally on the earth, until he shall have subjugated and put all his enemies under his feet : and those who have not shrunk from taking part with their suffering and despised Lord, shall, according to his benignant and unfailing promises, sit with him on his throne, and become partakers of his glory.

Among this happy band, we find those especially designated who shall have submitted to and suffered martyrdom “for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and (those who) had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or on their hands.” This special notice is, doubtless, introduced as a peculiar consolation to the saints of the latter days, who shall be exposed to the fiery persecutions and subtle deceits of the Antichrist and his False Prophet. The mention of them is an evidence of the severity of their trials ; and the triumphant result and reward of their faith and patience that is here depicted, will, no doubt, in their hour of trial, strengthen and support them in their sufferings, and enable them to persevere and endure even unto the end.

These saints, we are told, “lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” This expression we take in its literal sense, and conclude, that the millennial dispensation, the period of the personal reign of Christ on earth, will be one thousand years. The phrase is repeated four times in this and the three following verses; and, as there is nothing figurative or symbolical in the language of the passages in which it occurs, we are warranted in taking the words in their literal sense.

As to the nature of this millennial reign of Christ and his saints, we conceive that Jerusalem will, in fulfilment of the prophecies, become the metropolis of the world; and that all the other nations of the earth shall have been subdued and become subordinate to the kingdom of Israel, restored to God’s favour, and in possession of the blessings promised and secured by covenant to the fathers, with Christ their acknowledged King, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling gloriously with his saints on Mount Sion. “The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might. . . . They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord their God, and shall fear because of thee.”—Mic. vii. 16, 17. “*For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee (Israel) shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*”—Is. lx. 12. And that all these nations shall be required to do homage periodically to the ruling powers at Jerusalem, is plainly predicted in the prophecy of Zechariah—“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations

which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.”—Zech. xiv. 16. They shall be witnesses of, but not communicants in, the glory of Christ and his saints, as the Israelites were witnesses of God’s presence with Moses on Mount Sinai ; and as Peter, James, and John beheld the glorified Saviour in company with Moses and Elias, on the mount of transfiguration.

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle : the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city : and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”—Rev. xx. 7–10.

Thus it appears, that at the close of the millennial dispensation, Satan is to be loosed out of prison, and to recommence his long-suspended labour of deceiving the nations, and exciting them to rebellion against the reigning powers at Jerusalem ; and, at his instigation, the nations of the earth shall combine, and march their hosts, in number like the sand of the sea, to encompass “the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city,” when they shall be signally discomfited and destroyed by fire from heaven ; and their deceiver, Satan, shall be again taken, and cast into the lake of fire, where, with his former agents, the Beast and

False Prophet, he is to be tormented for ever and ever. All this is, for the most part, a repetition of the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning the descent of Gog and Magog, like a cloud, on the land of Israel “in the latter days,” when the inhabitants are described as dwelling safely “without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,” and when the Lord shall plead against their assailants “with blood and pestilence, hailstones, fire, and brimstone,” and cause them to fall upon the mountains of Israel, they and all their bands.—Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”—Rev. xx. 11–15.

The millennial dispensation having closed with the destruction of Satan and his rebellious host of the nations of the world, we are presented with a picture of the great and final judgment, in which the dead, both small and great—those to be saved and those to be damned—appear before God to receive their final doom. “The Books were opened,” and we are told that “the dead were judged out of these things

which were written in the books, *according to their works*;" from which we may collect that these are the Books of the law, and by which all being judged *according to their works*, are therefore all to be condemned; and would be for ever lost, but for the mercy of God in providing another book, which is "*the Book of Life*," in which are entered the names of the saved through Christ. It is styled, in the thirteenth chapter, "the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," "and whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." The final abode of those who shall be found written in the Book of Life will be depicted in the next chapter.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."—Rev. xxi. 1.

It is of importance to observe, that this verse, though it has been placed at the commencement of another chapter of "the Revelation," is obviously the concluding paragraph of the prophecy we have been considering; and is not, as is generally supposed, the commencement of the next. This appears from the passage immediately preceding it, where we are told, that before the face of him who sat upon the great white throne, "the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them"—to be succeeded, as is here announced, by a new heaven and a new earth; "and there shall be no more sea." The sea, we may recollect, when introduced in the Book of the

Revelation, as distinct from the earth, symbolizes the Gentile nations. This announcement we, therefore, conceive to be a prediction, that at this time there shall be neither Jew nor Gentile; all shall be God's people—all of them inhabitants of the NEW JERUSALEM, with which this blessed revelation of God's dealings with mankind closes, and to the investigation of which we shall proceed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

“Put on the beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city : for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.”—ISAIAH, lii. 1.

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write : for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things : and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God : and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal ; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the

children of Israel; on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour unto it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the

Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him : and they shall see his face ; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there ; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.”—Rev. xxi. 2–27, and xxii. 1–5.

THE foregoing is a description of the final abode of those “which are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” It is styled, “The Holy City, new Jerusalem,” “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife.” But whether it is to come into existence during the millennial dispensation, or only after that it shall have closed, is a question on which there has been much discussion and diversity of opinion. One class of expositors maintain that the New Jerusalem is to be in existence throughout the millennium, while another class insist that it is not to come into existence until after the millennium, and the creation of the new heaven and new earth. Difficulties present themselves to both of these constructions, which neither of the foregoing parties have been able to explain away to their own satisfaction, much less to the satisfaction of their opponents. We conceive that the New Jerusalem shall come into existence at the commencement of the millennium, at the time of the marriage of the Lamb—that it shall be the abode of the risen and reigning saints during the millennium, and that it shall continue after the close of the millennium, and throughout all eternity. This, on a critical examination, we shall find to be disclosed in the prophetic announcements before us ; and we hope to be able to convince our readers that this view is not chargeable with any of the difficulties and in-

consistencies which its opponents have alleged as objections against it. We shall first state these objections:—

To those who maintain that the New Jerusalem is to exist during the millennium, it is objected—

1. That the New Jerusalem is subsequent in point of time to the creation of the new heaven and the new earth; and that, therefore, as the new heaven and the new earth do not come into existence until the first heaven and earth shall have passed away, which occurs at the close of the millennium, the New Jerusalem cannot be in existence during the millennium.

2. The sea is to be in existence during the millennium, inasmuch as, at the close of it, the sea shall give up its dead; whereas there is to be no sea when the New Jerusalem shall come into existence.

3. Death is to exist during the millennium; for death is not destroyed until the close of it; whereas, in the New Jerusalem “there shall be no more death.”

4. The exclusion from the New Jerusalem is described as “the second death,” which is the final award of the lost, and after the millennium.

5. The title to enter the New Jerusalem is, that “they are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life,” which is not to be opened until after the millennium.

Now, as we have before observed, the view which we have taken of this prophecy is not open to any of these objections. This we shall proceed to show. In the first place, it does not appear from the language or structure of the prophecy, that the New Jerusalem

is to be wholly subsequent in point of time to the creation of the new heaven and the new earth; for, as we have before stated, the announcement, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, &c.," is the closing paragraph of the preceding prophecy of the final judgment, which is described at the conclusion of the previous chapter; and the vision of the New Jerusalem commences, as a separate vision, with the next verse, "And I John saw the holy city, &c." So that the New Jerusalem may exist during the continuance of the first heaven and the first earth, and continue to exist after that they shall have passed away. In the same manner, the New Jerusalem may, consistently with the language of the prophecy, exist when there is sea, and continue to exist when there shall be no more sea. This disposes of the first two of the foregoing objections. We shall now proceed to dispose of the others; and a critical examination of the language and structure of the prophecy will show that they are equally untenable.

The prophetic vision opens with a declaration by St. John, that he saw "the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven;" and then, after a certain announcement of "a great voice out of heaven," and another announcement from him "that sat upon the (great white) throne," the Prophet again declares that one of the seven angels showed him "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Thus there is a repetition of the vision of the descent of the New Jerusalem, after the intermediate announcements of the voice from heaven and of him that sat upon the throne; and

these announcements, which are thus inserted between the two declarations of the vision of the descent, are, we conceive, intended to convey to us the knowledge of the commencement and duration of the New Jerusalem, viz., that it is to commence with the millennium, and to continue through the millennial reign, and after the session of the Saviour on the great white throne of judgment, *from whose face the first heaven and earth are to fly away*, to be succeeded by the new heaven and the new earth. This we shall proceed to explain.

The announcement of “the great voice out of heaven,” is, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; *and there shall be no more death*, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be *any more pain* : for the former things are passed away.” This we conceive to be a succinct description of the New Jerusalem, and of the state of those who shall be the inhabitants of it *during the millennium*. The voice coming *from heaven*, shows that the announcement takes place *before* the creation of the *new heaven*, and is therefore, descriptive of a millennial scene, when “the tabernacle of God is with man” (Ezek. xxxvii. 27)—and of the state of the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem during that period, in the prophetic declaration that they shall be God’s people, without tears, without death, without sorrow, and without pain. It is obviously a description of the state of those *within the heavenly Jerusalem* during

that period, and nothing is here revealed of the state of those who shall be *without* it, at the same time. The exemption, therefore, from death, is only predicated of those *within the New Jerusalem*.

Next comes the announcement of him “that sat upon the throne”—“Behold, I make all things new; and he said unto me, Write : for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the waters of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death.” This manifestly conveys a declaration of the existence of the New Jerusalem, when the Great White Throne shall have been set up—and, therefore, after the millennium—but, unlike the immediate preceding description, it discloses the state of those who shall be *without* the heavenly Jerusalem at that time—viz., that all *without* shall have their portion in the lake of fire.

Thus, these two announcements, inserted, as we have seen, between the two declarations of the vision of the descent of the New Jerusalem, disclose, respectively the state of the blessed *within the new Jerusalem* during the millennium, and *before* the final judgment, and the state of the damned *without the new Jerusalem after* the final judgment. Nothing is revealed of the state of those who shall be *without* the New Jerusalem

during the millennium ; and it is only with respect to those that are *within*, that we are told, there shall be no more sorrow, death, or pain. It is clear that the exemption from death must be limited to those *within* the new Jerusalem, inasmuch as, if it were to be taken as a general extinction of death, we must also conclude that there is to be, at the same time, a general extinction of pain ; and then, what becomes of the prophetic declaration, that “ the smoke of their torments cometh up *for ever and ever* ? ” — Rev. xiv. 11.

These observations, if well founded, dispose of the third and fourth objections to the existence of the New Jerusalem during the millennium. For if the prophecy, that “ there shall be no more death,” is confined to those *within* the new Jerusalem during the millennium, there is no inconsistency in the fact that death shall exist during the same period ; for it may and shall exist among those who shall be *without*—viz., the nations of the world. Again, the description of the exclusion from the New Jerusalem being the second death, is not inconsistent with the existence of the New Jerusalem during the millennium ; because, as we have shewn, that is a description of those who shall be excluded after the setting up of the Great White Throne and the final judgment, and not of those who shall be excluded during the millennium.

The only remaining objection is, that those only who are found written in the Lamb’s Book of Life shall be entitled to enter into the New Jerusalem, and that title cannot be discovered or manifested until the books shall have been opened at the close of the mil-

lennium. The words, however, of the prophecy are, that "they only which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life" shall enter, without limiting the time of entry to the opening of the books. It is *the fact* of being entered in the Book of Life, and not the opening of the book, that constitutes the title to be an inhabitant of the New Jerusalem. Thus, it appears, that the existence of the New Jerusalem during the millennium does not involve any contradictions or inconsistencies. On the other hand, there is much in the prophecy before us to lead to the conclusion that the foregoing interpretation is not only correct, but that any other would be open to insurmountable objections. In the first place, the new Jerusalem is styled "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife;" and when Christ is represented as coming to crush his enemies, and to reign for the thousand years, the song of congratulation and rejoicing is, that "the marriage of the Lamb *is come*, and his wife hath made herself ready;" and the marriage supper is announced and described. It would, therefore, do violence to the prophetic order of events, were the coming of the Bride to be suspended till after the marriage supper, and throughout the millennial dispensation. In the next place, St. John is represented, when the approach of the Bride is announced to him before the commencement of the millennium (Rev. xix. 9, 10), as falling down to worship the angel, and receiving a rebuke: and afterwards, on witnessing the descent of the same Bride from heaven, in the prophecy before us, he is represented as falling down in the same manner to worship the angel, and receives a similar rebuke.

Now, it is more probable that the Evangelist should have been guilty of this offence but once, than that he should have repeated it ; and if so, the repetition of the incident identifies the pre-millennial advent of the Bride with the descent of the new Jerusalem, "the Lamb's Wife," from heaven.

Finally, the kings of the earth, it is stated, shall bring their glory and honour into the New Jerusalem (v. 24, 26). This, we need scarcely observe, could not occur after that the kings of the earth, and the earth itself, shall have passed away. For these reasons it is that we have arrived at the conclusion, that the New Jerusalem will be in existence during the millennium, and that it will then be the abode of the risen and translated saints of Christ. It will be the seat and centre of all power, dominion, and glory ; and all the nations of the earth shall be coerced to acknowledge its supremacy, and to submit themselves to the iron rod with which they shall be ruled.

In confirmation of the foregoing conclusion, we shall find, in the structure of the description of the New Jerusalem, a sort of duplicate revelation of it : one part of it (as it appears to us) relating to the time of the millennium, and the other to something beyond. We have it, in the first place, portrayed as being without the need of sun or moon, for the glory of God was the light of it ; that its gates were never shut, and that there was no night there ; that the nations walked in the light of it, and that the kings of the earth shall bring their glory, and that of the nations, into it ; and that nothing that defileth

shall enter therein. The Angel is then represented, in the next place, as showing to the Evangelist the River of the Water of Life, and the Tree of Life; and then comes another description, that there is no more curse—that the throne of God and the Lamb is in it—with a repetition of the description, that there shall be no night, nor need of the sun, moon, or candle; for the Lord giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

On a comparison of these two pictures, we are inclined to conclude, that the first is descriptive of the New Jerusalem during the millennium; and the second, of the same place subsequent to the millennium; and for these reasons. In the first place, the former of these descriptions is a repetition of all the features of the glorified Church which is given in the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah, and which is obviously a prophecy of that Church during the millennial dispensation, *when the nations and kings of the earth shall be in existence*. It is there represented, as it is in the passage of “the Revelation” before us, as having no need of the sun or of the moon, for that God is its everlasting light (v. 19, 20)—that its gates should be open continually, that men might bring the forces of THE GENTILES (the nations), and their kings into it (v. 11)—and that the people should be all righteous (v. 21)—or that nothing that defileth should enter into it; all which is manifestly a picture of the glorified Church during the millennial dispensation, when the kingdoms of the earth shall have been given to the saints, who shall exact the homage of the nations and their kings. On

the other hand, there is nothing to be found in the prophetic description of Isaiah, of the Water of Life, or of the Tree of Life, or of there being no more curse. We are, therefore, disposed to the conclusion, that the further revelation by the Angel of these particulars, is intended to be a revelation of something beyond the millennium, viz., of the New Jerusalem after the final judgment. Moreover, the otherwise needless repetition of the circumstances of there being no night, and of there being no need of the light of sun or moon, can only be explained or accounted for, on the supposition that there are two revelations—one of the New Jerusalem during, and the other of the same place subsequent to, the millennium. It is also worthy of remark, that the second of these revelations concludes with a declaration that the servants of God, or the saints, shall reign *for ever and ever*—not, as in the millennium, *for a thousand years*.

Comparing this latter description of the New Jerusalem with that of Paradise, in the second chapter of the Book of Genesis, we shall find a striking resemblance between them. The leading features of Paradise are the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the River which went out of Eden to water the Garden. In the apocalyptic picture of the New Jerusalem, we have presented to us the Tree of Life, and the River of Water of Life, but the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is absent, and the curse is withdrawn. It would appear, then, that the New Jerusalem will be the restoration to man of the blessings of the Paradisiac state, with-

out the Tree of Knowledge, which was the origin of his disobedience, and without the attendant curse, under which the earth has been withering since the day of Adam's temptation and fall. And thus, the end and aim of the dealings of God with mankind is this restoration to Paradise, purged of the curse that followed the disobedience of the first man. His redemption has been already purchased by the atonement of his Saviour. God, in his infinite love, has long since satisfied infinite justice; mercy and truth have met together, and man's justification is complete in the sight of his Creator. But sin and all its attendant evils must be exterminated before the glorious work shall have been perfected in the sight of the Creator. Satan still exists in the world. He has sown his tares among the wheat, and they cannot be rooted up until the harvest. Wickedness must be consummate before it can be effectually cut off and finally destroyed; and the object of the prophecy which we have been considering is, to reveal to the believer the progress and increase of evil; and that its progress and increase will find a termination in the triumph of righteousness, the manifestation of God's glory and power, and the return of man to the Paradise in which God had originally placed him—

“New heaven, new earth, ages of endless date,
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love;
To bring forth fruits—joy, and eternal bliss.”

And thus, as the Bible opens with a picture of man in Paradise, so it closes with a similar scene of man restored to the same state of blessedness and commu-

nion with his God—while all that is intermediate is an inspired record of his Creator's work of mercy, in bringing him back to a state of innocence and bliss through the atoning love of his Saviour and Redeemer, by which alone he could be restored to God's favour, consistently with the divine attributes of truth and justice.

After the vision of the New Jerusalem, "the Revelation" concludes thus:—

"And he said unto me, These things are faithful and true : and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold I come quickly : blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not : for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book : for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still : and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still : and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I

testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."—Rev. xxii. 6–21.

The incident of the Evangelist falling down to worship before the feet of the angel, we have already considered. It is one of the evidences, as we explained, that the existence of the New Jerusalem is to commence with the pre-millennial advent of Christ, inasmuch as the same incident is recorded as having taken place when the preparation of the Bride (the New Jerusalem) for the marriage of the Lamb is revealed to the Evangelist, in Rev. xix. 10. This is followed by an injunction, that the Book was not to be sealed, or its meaning veiled from the inquiring Christian, as the closing prophecy of Daniel was declared to have been shut up from those for whom it was written until "the time of the end ;" and an intimation, that the intervening period before the final fulfilment, should be one in which injustice and righteousness, filthiness and holiness, are to be intermingled, like the tares and the wheat in the present dispensation. Then, after a pledge of the blessing that is to attend the acquisition of a title to the "Tree of Life," and an invitation to all to become partakers of the "Water of Life," the revelation concludes with an anathema on those who shall dare

to meddle with the integrity of this book, by adding to, or detracting from, it. This warning threat is addressed to all generations of Christians throughout this dispensation. But the time is, in all probability, still in futurity, when the necessity for such a warning will be more manifest than it has ever yet been. The Holy Scriptures were sealed up from the inspection of Christendom for centuries, during which period no voice was heard proclaiming the glad tidings it contained; and though now extensively circulated, and apparently within the reach of all Christians, still the Bible is, to many, a book prohibited by their blind leaders of the blind. Even within the pale of the professedly Protestant community, a class of theologians has, of late, arisen, who have not hesitated to discredit and discountenance it as the rule of faith, and as containing all things necessary for salvation; and those who still cling to their inestimable treasure, are stigmatised as "Bibliolators." The existence of such principles are, to the watchful Christian, indications that the time may, and most probably will, come, when the agents of Satan shall add to their condemnation the anathemas denounced on all who shall add to, or take away from, the words of this prophecy; and when the blessing promised to him who "readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein (Rev. i. 3), shall be sought and acquired amid the fires of persecution, and at the peril of martyrdom.

Thus closes this revelation of God's dealings with man—restored to the enjoyment of all the blessings

prepared for him by the inestimable love of his Creator and Redeemer, before the foundations of the world were laid. What lies beyond are among the secret things of God—they are not revealed for us or for our children; and to speculate thereon would be presumptuous and vain; “for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them who love him.” Enough has been disclosed for our warning and guidance, if our investigations are based on true principles and sound doctrine. A right understanding of the meaning and purport of the earliest revelations of God’s intentions with regard to mankind, we have found to be not merely all-important, but absolutely necessary; and the absence of it has tainted the labours of the wisest and best of Christian inquirers, in their endeavours to elucidate the meaning of this, the last of God’s revelations. Without a clear knowledge and constant recognition of the restoration of the Jews, in fulfilment of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and the commencement of it in the extermination of the Roman dynasty, “the fourth kingdom on earth,” could not have been understood; and all the apocalyptic prophecies relating to the millennial dispensation must have been sealed up to them, rendering their other interpretations indistinct and comparatively unprofitable. Again, while the increase and consummation of evil was an unrecognised truth—while the investigations of the Christian interpreter proceeded on the false notion that the kingdom of Christ was to be established by grace, and

not by judgment, how could the revelations of the development of that kingdom have been understood and appreciated? These principles are to be collected from the Old Testament prophecies; and as all the revelations of the Apocalypse must be consistent with them, they must naturally prove a lantern to the path of the commentator who recognises and adopts them, while the rejection or non-recognition of them must necessarily darken the scenery, and mislead those who seek to explore its recesses.

THE true test of sound constructions of prophecy will be found in their consistency with themselves, and with the other parts of the Scriptures. We shall, therefore, before we conclude, briefly recapitulate our interpretations of the portion of "the Revelation" which we have been considering, to enable our readers to satisfy themselves, by a comparison of the several parts with each other and with the Scriptures at large, how far our conclusions can bear such a test.

First.—The Revelation opens with a vision of the Church's travail and the birth of the Saviour, while Satan, under the form of Pagan Rome, symbolized by a seven-headed and ten-horned Red Dragon, is watching to devour him—as Herod, the Roman Governor of Judea, was watching to destroy Christ at the time of his birth. The Saviour is, however, caught up to heaven; and, having purchased the

redemption of his saints—the first fruits of whom were those who had seen and embraced the promise afar off—Satan, their accuser and antagonist, is cast out before the presence of the Mediator and Purchaser of their redemption, and takes up his abode on earth as the Prince of the World (*αιωνος*) throughout this dispensation. The first proceeding of Satan is to persecute the Woman, or the Jewish Church, which flies into the wilderness, where, like her prototype Elijah, a place is prepared for her for the apocalyptic period of three years and a-half, until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, which is symbolized throughout the book of “the Revelation” by that period. Satan then turns his wrath against “the remnant of the Woman’s seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus”—the Christian Church—and against whom he has ever since been waging his unholy warfare. All this we have found to be consistent with the prophetic symbols, with the other Scriptures, and with historic facts; while every other system of interpretation imposes the necessity of spiritualising the language of the prophecy to an extent that is dangerous in principle, and which renders all reasoning unsatisfactory and inconclusive.

That such a principle is most dangerous, is manifest, when we consider, that to construe the casting of Satan out of heaven as a figurative incident, entails as a consequence, that the presence of Satan in heaven is also figurative; and then the record in the books of Job and Zechariah, of Satan appearing in the presence of God in heaven, as the accuser, must

be taken to be figurative likewise. Admitting that—how can the Christian resist the conclusion of the free-thinker, that the temptation and fall, or any other supernatural incident among the inspired records, is but an allegory or a myth? And that the reasonings from such a principle are inconclusive, appears from the fact, that while Mr. Burgh has, from the spiritualised imagery of the war in heaven, and the casting out of Satan, and a passage from Isaiah, (Is. lxvi. 5–9) drawn the conclusion that the prophecy is unfulfilled, Mr. Elliott has, from the same spiritualised imagery and the same text of Isaiah, arrived at the conclusion that it has been fulfilled.

Second.—Satan has gone forth, as we have seen, to make war with the Christian Church; and the first instrument of his warfare is presented to our view in the form of a seven-headed ten-horned Beast, with crowns on his horns, rising from the sea. Whatever may be the instruments of persecution which Satan may make use of, from the departure to the return of Christ, it is to be expected that the forms in which they are presented to our view in a revelation of this nature, ought to be in those forms which will comprise and manifest all the worst and most remarkable of their features. And as it is plain, that these diabolic agencies must become more and more aggravated in their Antichristian characteristics, as the time progresses, the forms in which they are presented will be the last, most apostate, and most rebellious forms which they shall assume, before the Lord himself shall come to exterminate them altogether.

Accordingly, we have interpreted the Beast rising *from the sea*—"the Destroyer of the Gentiles"—to be apostasy in its last form, impersonated by a blasphemous and rebellious persecuting potentate, claiming and receiving divine honours from all the Gentile world, and from "all that dwell upon the earth" (the Jews), except the very elect. This is the Antichrist, the King of ten kings, and the sovereign head of Rome, "the fourth kingdom upon earth," in its last stage, when it is to be struck by the Stone of Israel, that is thenceforth to fill the whole earth.

The second Beast is the agent of the first Beast (the Antichrist), to persecute, or seduce to his worship, "those that dwell upon the earth" (the restored Jews), who shall, at this time, be again in their own land, in covenant with God, and looking for their promised Messiah. He arises *out of the earth*, and all his revealed proceedings, his miraculous, coercive, and seductive powers, are exercised in, and connected with, "the earth and them that dwell upon the earth;" while those of the first Beast from *the sea* are connected with "the whole world," and "all kindreds, tongues, and nations," denoting, as we conceive, the Gentile world.

Third.—Having disclosed the instruments of Satan's persecutions, the next revelation is a septenary of prophetic angelic announcements, which adumbrate a season of refinement and purification of the Christian branch of God's Church, by which the peculiar trials and frailties of the believer, in the present dispensation, as enumerated by our Saviour in the parable of

the sower, are represented as cut off and separated from the good seed of God's word, in the harvest—while, under the figure of the treading of the wine-press, all the severed impurities are exterminated, as more fully detailed in the portents of the seven vials; and which end with the conflict between Christ and Antichrist on the field of Armageddon, in which Great Babylon is stated to come in remembrance before God.

This septenary of angelic announcements of God's dealings with the Christian Church, are similar in object and effect, and synchronous in time, to the portents of the seals which affect the Jewish Church; while the portents of the seven vials are, in like manner, analogous and synchronous to those of the seven trumpets—the one relating to the Christian, and the other to the restored Jewish Church. The intervening revelation of the redeemed on the sea of glass, singing the song of Moses, is analogous to the revelation which intervenes between the seals and trumpets of the sealed 144,000 of the tribes of Israel. The *object and effect* of these portents can alone be ascertained—the *nature and particulars* of the events predicted can only be disclosed by the fulfilment.

Fourth.—The Great Babylon having been mentioned as coming in remembrance before God in the seventh vial, an expanded descriptive revelation is given of her fall, under the figures of the Scarlet Whore and Babylon—a system and a city embodied and identified—the exponents of apostasy and worldliness come to their full. Papal Rome is manifestly portrayed under these figures—not merely as she is

and has been, but as she shall be hereafter, extended and exalted in spiritual supremacy. She is represented as riding a seven-headed, ten-horned, *uncrowned* Beast, "which was, and is not, and yet shall be"—symbolizing the Roman dynasty, stripped of her temporal supremacy, during the existence of the spiritual ascendancy of the Papacy. Her extinction as a system, and her utter extermination as a city, are portrayed, at the hands of the Ten Kings that are to arise and confederate to give their kingdom to the Beast (the Antichrist), which has been exhibited to our view in the thirteenth chapter. The Papacy, apostate as she is, must give way and fall before that the rebellious usurper of divinity can be developed, and assume the temporal supremacy of "King of Kings," and the spiritual ascendancy of "Lord of Lords." In this struggle Rome shall be burned, as described in the eighteenth chapter ; and the Antichrist, with the aid of his False Prophet, shall seek to establish himself on the Messiah's throne on Mount Zion, where he shall stumble and come to his end.

Fifth.—The Papacy and Rome being extinguished, the next section of the Apocalypse (Rev. xix.) opens with a song of rejoicing for their destruction ; and the Whore being destroyed, the approach of the Bride and the marriage of the Lamb is announced ; and Christ appears, with his saints, to take vengeance of, and to exterminate his foes, who at last appear in open rebellion, like Korah and his company, on the field of Armageddon, on the mountains of Israel. The Beast, and the Kings of the earth (the Ten Kings), with their armies, are vanquished.

The Beast and his False Prophet are taken, and cast *alive* into the fire burning with brimstone, and the remnant are slain with the sword—they perish in the gainsaying of Core (Jude, 11). The remaining enemy, Satan, appeared not on the field of Armageddon ; and therefore, not having been captured in the conflict, an angel is sent down to bind and cast him into the bottomless pit, where he is to remain throughout the one thousand years of the millennial dispensation.

Sixth.—The enemies of Christ having been slain or taken captive, and the earth having been purged of the originators and promoters of iniquity, the next section of “the Revelation” discloses a picture of the millennial dispensation—the period of “the restitution of all things,” when the glory shall return to Israel, and when Christ and his saints shall sit on thrones, and reign gloriously on Mount Sion, the centre of power and dominion over the nations of the earth, subjugated and submitting to his rule for a thousand years. At the close of this period, Satan is let loose, and is again to go forth to deceive the nations, and excite them to revolt against their King. Their hosts are to march against the beloved city Jerusalem, and to encompass the camp of the saints, where they meet their final doom ; and their leader, Satan, is again captured, and finally cast into the lake of fire, “where the Beast and False Prophet are.” Then appears the Great White Throne of judgment of the dead, both great and small ; and whosoever shall not be found written in the Book of Life shall be cast into the lake of fire. The heaven and the earth pass away before the face of Him who sitteth upon

the throne ; and this sketch of the millennium closes with a vision of “a new heaven and a new earth ;” when, it is said, “there shall be no more sea”—no more Gentiles ; but all shall be inhabitants of the New Jerusalem.

Seventh.—The Evangelist closes his prophecy with a vision of the New Jerusalem, the holy city, the Bride, the Lamb’s wife ; and which we have shewn, from the structure and language of the prophecy, to be a revelation of the New Jerusalem, the abode of the blessed, as it shall exist during the millennium, as well as subsequent thereto, when the new heaven and the new earth shall have come into existence. It will be, as we have likewise shewn, the restoration of man to the Paradise in which he had been originally placed by his Creator, and which shall have been recovered for him by his Redeemer, but divested of the Tree of Knowledge which caused his transgression, and purged of the curse that was entailed on it by his fall. And thus, in the prophecy which we have been unfolding, we find a history of God’s dealings with the human race, from the birth of the Saviour to the perfection of the work of redemption and “restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets since the world began.”

Let the reader compare the foregoing outline and summary of our interpretations with the Holy Scriptures, with history, sacred and profane, and with his own observation and experience, and he will find that they are consistent with God’s past dealings with mankind, corroborated by his prophecies, whether fulfilled or unfulfilled, and confirmed by passing

events. What has been fulfilled, or is in progress of fulfilment, is depicted with an accuracy that is as interesting as it must be astonishing to the eye of understanding. The origin of the New, and the ejection of the Old Dispensation Church, are almost literally described ; and the perversion of Christianity in the aggressive usurpations of Papal Rome, is depicted with the fidelity of an inspired pen. And the more closely we examine and study the progress and pretensions of the Papacy, the nature of her connexion with Rome, and the state of the Roman dynasty during her existence, the more exact do we find the correspondence between the system of Romanism and the Harlot of "the Revelation"—a correspondence in feature and outline which, as time and events progress, is becoming each day more and more defined and manifest to the eye of the Christian inquirer. This knowledge of the fulfilled portion of "the Revelation," leads, as we have seen, to such a knowledge of that which is unfulfilled, as is sufficient to point out the nature, object, and result of the perils and trials which the believer of the latter days will be called on to encounter, and to strengthen him to endure unto the end, that he may be counted worthy to sit with Christ on his throne, even as Christ overcame and is set down with his Father on his throne.

Thus it is manifest from these prophecies, that, whatever may be the form in which the consummation of evil shall appear, and whatever may be the time of its appearance, it will be a development of "the mystery of iniquity" that is connected with Rome, "the fourth kingdom upon earth," which is

to be struck and exterminated by the Stone of Israel at the close of this dispensation. It is, therefore, the duty as well as the interest of the Christian, whether in his individual capacity or as a member of a Protestant community, to watch with jealous vigilance, and meet with uncompromising hostility, the untiring encroachments of Rome, and the no less fatal insinuations of Romish principles. The ultimate triumph of Romanism and apostasy is inevitable ; for the pages of prophecy reveal, what daily experience and observation is confirming to the inquiring mind, that this unchanging system shall spread like a cloud over the face of the earth, and extinguish Gospel truth, before that it shall be itself extinguished. And when once the final triumph shall have commenced, the progress will be sure and rapid. As a system, it has, as we have seen, much to recommend it to unregenerate minds, which are influenced by events, and estimate the propriety of principles by results to the eye of sight, being wholly blind to that which is only discernible to the eye of faith. England has hitherto been hostile to Rome, and opposed a stubborn front to her aggressions even in the dark ages ; and England may yet be permitted to continue to be a witness, defying her open hostility, and withstanding her covert machinations. But, if we have rightly interpreted these prophecies, the time will come when she, too, will be drawn into the vortex of apostasy and infidelity—when the people of God must enter into their secret chambers, and shut their doors about them for a little moment, until the indignation be past.

Nor is it difficult for the reflecting mind to conjecture the progress of events that may lead to such a consummation. The spirit of liberty that stirs within the breasts of the great body of mankind, but more especially of those of the Saxon race, has been the barrier, under God, that has long kept out the flood of Popery from this nation. That very spirit is, in its expansion, engendering principles of action which are obviously leading to democracy and licentiousness, and which must eventually, in their progress, rouse, in self-defence, the spirit of despotism, as we have lately seen exemplified in France. The aid of the Papacy, the right arm of despotic power, will be evoked, thus rendering it triumphant here as elsewhere, and opening the way for the development of the Antichrist, who shall reign over all the earth through his subordinate kings. Such will be the probable course of events. Let the Christian put on the whole armour of God, and be prepared, under all circumstances, to uphold His principles and His precepts. It is in our times, as it was in those of Eli, "the Word of the Lord was precious in those days—*there was no open vision.*"—Sam. iii. 1. May God enable each of us thus to hold fast the faith, and to vindicate and maintain in their integrity and sufficiency the Scripture evidences of it which have been committed to us, that we may "be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."—Luke, xxi. 36.

THE END.

CORRIGENDA.

PAGE.

- 9, *l.* 18, *for* "9th" *read* "10th."
- 123, *l.* 3, *for* "ten-headed" *read* "two-headed."
- 181, *l.* 4 from the bottom, *for* "deceiver" *read* "dr .ma."



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